THE VIRGIN BIRTH

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By the Same Author

CHRIST OR CHAOS
CONVENT LIFE
CREDENTIALS OF CHRISTIANITY
DIVINE COUNSELLOR
GOD AND MYSELF
HAND OF GOD
YOU AND YOURS

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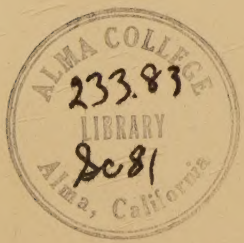
THE VIRGIN BIRTH

BY

MARTIN J. SCOTT, S.J.



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THE VIRGIN BIRTH

THE ISSUE

The religious world of evangelical Christians is now convulsed by a controversy which threatens to force many believers into the ranks of paganism. The most fundamental tenets of revealed religion are being assailed or repudiated by the very ones pledged to uphold them. Outright paganism is understandable. But paganism in a Christian sanctuary is unintelligible. It means a renunciation of logic or of sincerity.

Since not a few shepherds of flocks are now leading their charges, not to green pastures, but to dry wastes where they will perish, it is well for Christians of all denominations to look about them and see how they stand and whither they are going. To this end this treatise on a vital religious matter is directed.

Christianity is an outstanding fact of twenty centuries. It is responsible for all that is really worth while in the world today. Christianity is

a supernatural religion or nothing. Its origin was proclaimed from the very beginning to be supernatural, its credentials were supernatural, and its motives were supernatural. After nearly two thousand years of supernatural character, it is now too late to strip it of its characteristic feature.

Wise men have not begun to appear only now. The early Christians were not simpletons. Justin, Augustine, Ambrose, Gregory, Basil and a whole band of such intellectual giants were not dupes. Criticism did not have to wait for the twentieth century for birth.

We rightly glory in our material progress, but that is the least of man's glories. Life may be filled with material possessions and yet be empty. Man needs something more than earth to satisfy him. The most dazzling material splendor has marked the periods of mankind's greatest misery.

If Christianity is not supernatural, if it is not a revelation, let us be done with it, rather let us away with it, for it is only a sham. But a sham never endures as Christianity has endured, and never produces the civilization which Christianity has produced. It is with a view of showing the firmness of the foundation on which

Christianity, as a supernatural structure, rests, that the following considerations are presented.

There is no fear that the supernatural religion established by Christ will be destroyed by the assaults of the new paganism. God has guaranteed His Church to last unto the end of time. But there *is* fear that many who have been trustful adherents of their faith may have that trust destroyed, and thus be thrown back into the position of those who sat in darkness and without hope before the coming of Christ. For if Christ be not divine, He can mean no more to mankind than any sage of old, whose words of wisdom were for acceptance or refusal, according to individual whim.

But Christ is more than a sage. Christ spoke with authority. Millions died for Him. Countless millions lived and now live for Him. His words are life and power. He gives an outlook on life which makes the meanest life, not only worth while, but the greatest thing in the whole world; for its issue, if lived aright, is unto everlasting life, peace and glory.

THE VIRGIN BIRTH

The Virgin Birth may be called a test case of divine revelation. The birth of Christ is but one of many supernatural events recorded in the Bible. Any other event therein recorded might have been, just as well as this, the subject of controversy between Fundamentalists and Modernists.

We shall begin by stating precisely what is meant by the Virgin Birth. First of all, it does not refer to the birth of Mary. It has no reference to the Immaculate Conception. It means that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin. This signifies that His birth was miraculous, that He had no human father, that, instead, the power of God effected, by a special act of omnipotence, what ordinarily and naturally happens by human generation. In other words, it was an exception to the natural law of human birth.

And why is it called in question by Modernists? Because they assert that the laws of nature are invariable, and that in consequence the miraculous is a myth, and that the miracle of

Christ's birth without a human father is such a myth. Fundamentalists, who hold in basic matters the traditional tenets of Christianity, affirm that Mary was a virgin, and that the Holy One, born of her, was the true Son of God, conceived in her womb by the power of the Holy Spirit, who in the beginning made all things out of nothing.

The Virgin Birth thus becomes a test case of the miraculous. Of course many other things are involved in the controversy, but in the main it is a challenge of the miraculous by the Modernists. Before we proceed in the matter, it is well to say a word about the Scriptures, which narrate the Virgin Birth.

There has been a great deal of confusion and loose talk with regard to the sacred writings which tell us of Christ. In the first place, there does not exist in the world today a document or manuscript which belongs to the time of Christ. This refers to writings of every kind, the Greek and Latin classics included, and the whole literature of antiquity. What we have are copies of the originals, or copies of copies. The reason of it is evident: the ravages of time.

However, no manuscript copy of any classical author approaches at all so near to the date of the original as do our New Testament manu-

scripts to the date of theirs. Twenty Scripture manuscripts belong to the eighth century, twelve to the sixth, five to the fifth, and three to the fourth. This means that the oldest manuscript copy of the New Testament now extant was made sixteen hundred years ago, some three hundred years after the original New Testament manuscript.

But very early (about 150 A.D.) the original New Testament was translated into other languages. Of these translations we have copies which date from the third century. No other book in the world is so well attested for genuineness and authenticity as the New Testament. This is the verdict of the most learned critics of the world today. If the New Testament is not accepted as history, we must reject the whole history of antiquity, and can trust to no ancient documents.

Modernists, knowing the genuineness of the New Testament, and yet not being willing to accept miracles, with which that sacred volume abounds, declare that, although the New Testament is authentic and genuine, it is nevertheless not a record of fact. They consider it merely a human document, and as such not only liable to misstatements, but abounding in them.

Fundamentalists, on the other hand, regard

the Bible as the inspired word of God, and as such free of error. This is the gist of the controversy of which the Virgin Birth is, as said, a sort of test case.

The first thing that strikes a looker-on in this matter is that the Bible does not explain itself. They who assume that the Bible alone is the rule of faith find that it leads to diametrically opposite creeds. And these creeds are not mere accidental variations, but fundamental and contradictory, the one of the other.

The New Testament distinctly, repeatedly and unmistakably declares the Virgin Birth. It is necessary to discredit its historical value, or to accept the Virgin Birth. It is not enough to explain away this text or that in order to set aside the Virgin Birth. The historical value of the sacred volume itself must be denied if the Virgin Birth is to be rejected.

Nothing in all Scripture is set forth in plainer language or more detailed circumstances than the Virgin Birth of Christ. If this narrative can be excluded or distorted, we may as well throw the Bible overboard, and take our position with those who have unchristianized themselves.

The narrative from St. Luke, I. 26, follows:

"26. And in the sixth month, the angel Ga-

briel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth.

27. To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

28. And the angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

29. Who having heard, was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be.

30. And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God.

31. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus.

32. He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father; and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever.

33. And of his kingdom there shall be no end.

34. And Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done, because I know not man?

35. And the angel answering, said to her: The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee.

And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

36. And behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren:

37. Because no word shall be impossible with God.

38. And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her."

In due time the Child was born as thus recorded by St. Luke, II. 6:

"6. And it came to pass, that when they were there, her days were accomplished, that she should be delivered.

7. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

8. And there were in the same country shepherds watching, and keeping the night watches over their flock.

9. And behold an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the brightness of God shone round about them; and they feared with a great fear.

10. And the angel said to them: Fear not;

for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people:

11. For, this day, is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David.

12. And this shall be a sign unto you. You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger.

13. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God, and saying:

14. Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will."

With regard to the Gospel narrative, let us note briefly several points. Mary is called a virgin, though espoused. She spoke as a virgin: "How shall this be done, *because I know not man?*" (the Hebrew equivalent for being unmarried.) The fact is plainly stated to be miraculous: "Because no word shall be impossible with God."

Moreover, if Joseph were the father of the Child, why was he minded to put Mary away when he realized her condition? It required the word from heaven to assure him: "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. I. 20).

Against the plain statement of the Gospel

narrative, some Modernists object that St. Mark, St. John and St. Paul make no mention of the Virgin Birth, consequently it was not a fact. Others contend that the word *virgin* in the prophecy of Isaias is misinterpreted by St. Matthew. There are other objections by the opponents of the Virgin Birth, but we shall confine ourselves to these two, since in answering them, the others vanish.

The first argument of the opponents of the Virgin Birth is what is called the argument of silence. They contend that since St. Mark, St. John and St. Paul make no reference to the Virgin Birth, therefore it was not a fact. This argument proves nothing, as we shall see.

There are only a few facts in the Gospels which are recorded by all the Evangelists. By the argument of silence, the Sermon on the Mount would be rejected, and the parable of the Good Samaritan, and other equally distinctive Christian features of the Gospel. But although the silence of some of the Evangelists is no argument, we shall consider this objection to satisfy those who possibly may be misled by it.

Every writer has an object in view when he records events. This may be made clear by a modern illustration. Suppose four of the great metropolitan newspapers assign writers to report

some public event. It is safe to say that each reporter will give importance to what his paper is supposed to stress. One writer will emphasize certain things which another will entirely ignore.

Suppose it is that great social affair in New York called the Opera. One paper, whose readers include many society people, will want to give the names of persons of distinction who were present, their dress, the names of the occupants of boxes, etc. Another paper, whose readers want musical news, will make no mention at all of those who were present, nor of dress, but will concentrate on the artists and the quality of their performance. The fact that one of the papers made no mention of the society folk present would not be an argument that they were not there.

Another illustration: When newspapers send their reporters to a national Democratic or Republican convention, the reporter from California will not send back home the same news as the reporter from Maine. Persons and things of paramount interest to one set of people will be of no concern whatsoever to another group.

The Evangelists were writing each for special classes of readers and with a special object in view. St. Matthew wrote his Gospel for the

Jews. Hence, unlike the other Evangelists, he does not explain Hebrew customs or institutions. His purpose was to prove to his own people that Jesus was the promised Messiah. This explains his constant references to the Messianic prophecies and their fulfilment in our Lord. He takes it for granted that the Scriptures are familiar to his readers. His Gospel contains some seventy quotations from the Old Testament, more than all the other Gospels combined.

St. Mark was the companion of St. Peter, and his Gospel reflects the personality and purpose of that Apostle. St. Peter, as we know, made it the object of his ministry to convince his hearers that Christ was truly the Son of God. St. Mark, accordingly, begins his Gospel with the preaching of John the Baptist, passing over entirely the infancy and childhood of Jesus. He presents our Lord at the opening of His public ministry, and shows Him exercising that miraculous power which proclaimed Him divine. As the purpose of St. Mark was to show that Christ was God, he makes the burden of his Gospel a narration of our Lord's miracles. These he presents in such number, variety and detail that his has been called the "Gospel of Miracles."

St. Luke himself tells us the purpose he had in view in writing his Gospel, which was to

supplement and arrange in an orderly manner the details of the life and ministry of our Saviour. St. Matthew and St. Mark give us very few details of the childhood of Jesus or of St. John the Baptist. St. Luke fills in these gaps and thus brings out more clearly the figure of Christ Himself.

Luke, as we know, was the companion and secretary of St. Paul. His Gospel throughout reflects the purpose of the Apostle of the Gentiles, which was to show the universality of Christ's redemption. With this object in view, St. Luke shows that salvation is for all, for Samaritans, for publicans and sinners, and for Gentiles. To this end the genealogy of Jesus is carried back to Adam, the father of all men, and, at the birth of the Saviour, the angels announce peace to all men of good will.

No wonder that St. Luke's is called the "Gospel of Mercy." Throughout it shows the loving heart of Jesus, seeking and restoring the lost and bruised sheep. Magdalen and the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan attest the burning desire of the Saviour to lead back to peace and salvation sinner and stranger. No one who reads St. Luke's Gospel can fail to see that his aim is to present Christ as the Saviour of all, Jew and Gentile, sinners and righteous.

St. John's Gospel was written long after the others. Its object was twofold, to supply what the others had omitted, and to establish unequivocally the divinity of Christ and His divine mission. He omits most of the things narrated by the other Evangelists, and records a number of events of which they make no mention.

In the very infancy of Christianity, heresy began to show its head. Questions arose as to the nature of Christ. Errors were broached with regard to His humanity and divinity. St. John determined to set forth the nature of our Lord so unequivocally that henceforth there could be no question of who and what Christ was, without denying the meaning of the plainest possible language. He states himself what his motive was: "Many other signs did Jesus in the sight of his disciples which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name." Hence his wonderful prelude: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, . . . and the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us."

The four Evangelists, therefore, each having his own special purpose and class of readers, reported accordingly. With regard to the Virgin

Birth, Matthew and Luke positively and in detail record it. Against their positive record no amount of negative argument can avail. Silence on the part of others is corroboration rather than refutation.

St. Mark, St. John and St. Paul imply the Virgin Birth, for although they state that the Jews called Jesus the son of Joseph, they themselves never do so. For them, he is the Son of God or the Son of Mary. When we consider the customs and traditions of the Jews, it is a remarkable thing that the Evangelists refer to Jesus as the Son of Mary. Simon Peter is called Simon son of Jonas, no mention being made of his mother, and so generally with regard to Jewish genealogy. But in the case of Christ, the Evangelists never call Him the Son of Joseph, but the Son of Mary or the Son of God.

True, Jesus was known to the Jews as the son of Joseph. If he were not, Mary would have been considered an adulteress. Christ did not reveal Himself or His mission until He was a mature man. Meanwhile, at Nazareth, He was of the household of Joseph and Mary. Unless Joseph were held to be His father, He had been an outcast, and Mary doubtless stoned to death.

Moreover, the Jews themselves, hostile as they were to the early Christian Church, never raised

an issue about the paternity of Christ. They knew what the Gospels meant when Joseph was referred to as the father of Jesus. They interpreted the word *father* in the light of what was positively and explicitly stated with regard to the divine paternity. Language has no meaning if the account of St. Luke can be made to square with human paternity. It is strange that modern opponents of Christ do not show themselves at least as fair critics as the scribes and Pharisees.

Of course Joseph was the father of Christ before the world. That was his office. If Mary had stated that Jesus had no human father, the consequences would have been dreadful. It was not until after the establishment of the Church, probably, that she revealed to the Apostles the mystery of the Incarnation. That was her own sacred treasure, which she imparted to the Church in God's own time. After the descent of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles were prepared for every revelation concerning the Messiah.

Now, after two thousand years, to oppose a positive, unequivocal narrative by a single word which admits of accommodation with that narrative is, to say the least, not sound criticism.

Perhaps an illustration from our own history will bring home to us the fallacy of taking a word or phrase out of its proper background.

Washington was commander-in-chief of our forces during the War for Independence. It is on record that on several occasions he pleaded with his soldiers not to leave the army and return home.

Two thousand years hence, critics might argue that Washington was not commander-in-chief, for if he had been, he would not have pleaded with his soldiers, but commanded them. But we know that the soldiers with whom he pleaded had enlisted for a short period only and were entitled to leave the ranks. This detail, however, would not be handed down in a document which recorded only the outlines of the history of that epoch. Sound criticism would dictate that, in view of the documentary evidence of Washington's authority, his pleading had some explanation other than that he was not in command.

So with the Virgin Birth. In view of the documentary evidence of Matthew and Luke for the Virgin Birth, everything else referring to it must be interpreted in accordance with that fact.

History will record that Woodrow Wilson kept us out of war. It will also record that he was our war president. One statement is not in conflict with the other, as we who understand all

the circumstances know. But to a future critic, it might give considerable study if, two thousand years hence, he should read a history of the World War as condensed as are the Gospels.

To put the matter in a nutshell, the Gospel plainly and circumstantially records the Virgin Birth of our Saviour. Joseph is referred to as the father of Jesus. In view of the fact that, unless he was reputed the father of Jesus, Mary would be a disgraced woman, the reason for reputing him the father is evident. Moreover, in case it were not evident, we should have to conclude that, in view of the positive evidence of divine paternity, Joseph's paternity was nominal only.

The second objection to the Virgin Birth is that Matthew was mistaken in quoting the prophecy of Isaias to the effect that a virgin should give birth to the Messiah. Matthew states that the birth of the Saviour is the fulfilment of the Virgin Birth prophecy. Critics object that the word used by Isaias does not necessarily mean virgin.

The words of Isaias are: "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (Is. VII. 14). The Hebrew word used by Isaias for virgin is *almah*. This word is used in six other places

in the Hebrew Old Testament. In four places it means virgin (Gen. XXIV. 43; Exod. II. 8; Cant. I. 2, and VI. 7). In two places it may mean virgin (Ps. LXVII. 26; Prov. XXX. 19).

The Syriac and Greek translators of the Bible understood *almah* to mean virgin. This alone should be conclusive against every surmise of the critics. Moreover, in this prophecy, there is question of a *divine sign.* If Emmanuel were born in the ordinary way, there would be no such sign.

Finally, Matthew himself, who certainly should have known, understood the word *almah* to mean virgin, for after describing the miraculous birth of Jesus, he says: "Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying: Behold a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is God with us." Matthew, a Hebrew, writing for Hebrews, certainly was qualified, apart from divine inspiration, to say what was the meaning of the word.

The Church which gave us the Bible declares that the Virgin Birth narrative is to be taken literally. If the Gospels are not true in any one instance, they are not the word of God, for God's word is not partly true and partly false; and

if they are not God's word, they have no binding force on conscience, but are merely the views of a philosopher or sage, which we are free to accept or to reject.

The wisest man that ever lived can do no more than advise or exhort; his words have no sanction. But the word of God is power. It cannot be ignored with impunity. If the Gospels are not God's word, the Faith built on them rests on nothing but human fallibility, the Hope inspired by them has no guarantee of fulfilment, and the Charity inculcated by them has no sanction. Christian Faith, Hope and Charity, the fundamental Christian virtues and incentives, vanish with the historical value of Scripture.

It is all very well to speak of Christ as the ideal man, and of His discourses as sublime, but the ideal and the sublime do not affect authoritatively the conduct of the generality of mankind. Some of the most ardent enthusiasts of the ideal and the sublime have been the most degraded moral specimens of the human race. Religion, if it means anything, has to reach the conscience authoritatively. Only a divine religion can do that. They, therefore, who reject the Gospels as the word of God may assume the name of Christians, but they are nothing more than members of a human cult.

The Christ of the Bible is assuredly divine. We get our estimate of Christ mainly from the Bible. Now a chain is no stronger than its weakest link. If the Scriptures are false in recording the Virgin Birth, they may be false in whatever they say of Christ, and thus the foundation on which His divinity rests collapses.

Some say His divinity does not depend on the Virgin Birth. But the same sources which proclaim His divinity also proclaim the Virgin Birth. Why accept these sources for one fact and reject them for the other? That is neither soundly critical nor scientific. It is true that in itself the divinity does not depend on the Virgin Birth. Christ was born of a virgin because He was God; He was not God because He was born of a virgin.

But that is not the point. It is this: The same authority which proclaims the Virgin Birth also proclaims His divinity. That authority is either reliable or not. If reliable, divinity and Virgin Birth are both to be accepted; if not reliable, neither is to be believed. In this sense it is impossible to dissociate the Virgin Birth from the divinity.

Here it is necessary to say a word on the Bible. Of course I must be very brief. Christ established a Church, not a book. He com-

manded that Church to teach the truths He imparted to her. He promised to be with her always, and that she should never teach falsehood. In giving the Apostles their commission, He said: "He who hears you, hears me." He thus sent them forth as His representatives. They were to represent, not misrepresent Him. They formed the Church of which He said: "He who hears you, hears me." Consequently His Church was Himself vicariously in the world. She was the depositary of His truth and the teacher with His authority.

Even if He had not guaranteed His Church against error, it would follow from His commission to her that she could not fall into error. As God, He was bound to see that His Church would not mislead mankind. His divinity was established before He established His Church, and His Church was established before the Gospels were in existence.

But why do we say that if we reject the Bible we reject the divinity of Christ? For this reason and no other: The Church has solemnly declared that the Bible, which she herself compiled, is the inspired word of God. Having so declared, either it is inspired or it is not.

If the Bible is inspired Christ is manifestly divine. If it is not inspired, the Church, which

He guaranteed against error, has erred in declaring it inspired, and He is manifestly not divine, since a divine guarantee cannot fail. In this sense the rejection of the Bible is the rejection of the divinity of Christ.

After the Church had been established and was carrying on her divine mission for over a century without the Bible she collected certain writings and put them together, and called them the Bible. The Gospels and Epistles and the Acts of the Apostles were a correspondence or narrative of events passing among the early Christians.

The Church, by her divine authority, selected from among these writings the documents now known as the New Testament, and proclaimed them the inspired word of God. She did the same with regard to the various writings which constitute the Old Testament. That, in brief, is the making of the Bible. The very constituent parts of it were selected by the Church from a multitude of writings.

The Bible, therefore, did not make itself, it did not fall from the sky. It is a compilation by the Church, which she declares to be the inspired word of God. The Bible does not declare its own inspiration. It is true that, in certain

passages, it says that Scripture is inspired, but it nowhere says what constitutes Scripture. Even the passages which declare Scripture to be inspired were declared to be Scripture by the Church.

It may occur to the reader to inquire on what grounds the Church based her teaching that Scripture was inspired. With regard to the Old Testament, Christ repeatedly referred to the Scriptures as proof from heaven about Himself and His mission. He frequently declared that the Scriptures must be fulfilled. If they were only the statements of men, there would be no call for such declarations.

With regard to the New Testament, the Gospels, Acts, Epistles, etc., convey the teaching of the Apostles, who were guaranteed against error by Christ. The Church decided which were Apostolic writings, and declared them inspired of God. The New Testament was written either by the Apostles, principally Matthew and John and Paul, or by the Evangelists, Mark and Luke, under Apostolic supervision.

Two things are essential to the Bible, its contents and its inspiration. The Church is the sole guarantee for both. And what do we mean by *inspiration?* This is the most important thing to understand aright. By *inspiration* the Church

understands one thing, her opponents another. In saying the *Church,* I mean that Church which gave us the Bible and alone knows what she meant by *inspiration.* In her doctrine of inspiration the Church proclaims that every statement in the *original* Scripture of the Old and New Testaments is inspired of God. She does not say in what sense a statement is to be taken, literal, figurative or symbolic. She simply declares that Scripture is the inspired word of God, and she claims for herself the interpretation of each and every text.

This is no new framing of the matter to suit the modern mind. It was always thus. St. Augustine, some fifteen hundred years ago, wrote a treatise with regard to the six days of creation, discussing whether they meant ordinary days or great epochs of time. Unless the Church at that time regarded the interpretation of the six days an open question, St. Augustine, a great doctor of divinity, would never have seriously discussed the passage, and that too with the approbation of the Church.

But, you may say, how are we to know in what sense to interpret Scripture? Precisely. The same way that we know in what sense to understand the constitution of the United States. An authoritative decision of the Supreme Court

gives the interpretation of the constitution, and an authoritative decision of the divinely guided Church of Christ gives the interpretation of Scripture.

To illustrate: Scripture states that Josue commanded the sun to stand still. Bible commentators interpret this to mean that it was a figure of speech, signifying that the day was prolonged. This is not far-fetched. No interpretation was called for previous to modern astronomy. In those days everybody believed that the sun moved across the sky. We speak in the same fashion today, even with our scientific knowledge. We say the sun rises in the East and sets in the West. It does not. But we all understand that it is a figure of speech.

Suppose that two thousand years from now a so-called scientific man of that future time should come across a book or fragment written by Edison, in which it was stated that the sun rose in the East and set in the West. He would, if he did not know our times and ways, infer that Edison was ignorant of the earth's motion. This in passing, and to show the need of interpretation.

When it was declared that "the Bible, the whole Bible and nothing but the Bible" was the rule of faith, the Church of Christ said No.

Today we see what such a rule leads to—religious anarchy. The Church of Christ was accused of being the enemy of the Bible, she who was its parent. Today she is the sole defender of the Bible in the only sense in which it can be defended. They who hold to the literal interpretation of the Bible in the various modern languages are in deep water.

A few facts will illustrate this: The New Testament was originally written, for the most part, in Greek. Of the original manuscripts not one has come down to us. The same is true of the originals of the Greek and Latin classics. We have copies of the originals, or copies of copies. Of these copies of the New Testament, thousands and thousands were made, all by hand, of course. Over four thousand such copies have come down to us.

Copying a manuscript leads often to some variation. Before the invention of printing, accuracy was not easy. As a result, we find more than 150,000 variant readings in the earlier copies of the New Testament. It is true that very few are of real importance, but what becomes of the literal interpretation of our Bible of today? In point of fact, no manuscript copy of any classical author can compare in certainty and purity with the text of the New Testament. But that

does not help the claim of those whose creed is "the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible."

Every time the Bible is translated into another language, it is bound to have errors, at least literal. If a thousand scholars were to translate the Bible from one language to another, it is safe to say that there would be a thousand different versions. That is why the Church which gave us the Bible never approves of a version until she has carefully examined it and found that it is substantially correct. Even then she does not hold that that version is inspired. Inspiration refers merely to the original manuscript, written centuries and centuries ago. Of all copies—and there exist none but copies now—the Church states, when she approves them, that they are faithful reproductions.

The Church rarely defines the definite sense of a particular passage of Scripture. Only when a statement which affects faith or morals is called into question, and she must decide, does she act. For instance, she has solemnly proclaimed that when Christ said: *"This is my body,"* He meant literally what He said. She is on record for this. With regard to the six days of creation, the universality of the Deluge and other similar statements, she has made no def-

inite pronouncement as to how they shall be interpreted.

All she holds is that the original writers of those statements were inspired by God to write what He wanted them to write. The message they convey to mankind will be according to the intention of God, who inspired them. In particular what that message signifies God will declare by His Church when necessary.

The important thing for Christians to remember is that the Church which gave us the Bible is the voice of God in the world. She will speak for Him whenever He ordains. He has given His solemn word that He will be with her always. Heaven and earth may pass away, but His word never. This guarantee of Christ to His Church constitutes her the infallible interpreter of His divine word. Those who reject this divinely appointed interpreter must fall back on their own fallible judgment.

No citizen of the United States, no matter how learned he be, is allowed to be the interpreter of the constitution. If in the matter of a man-made document we see the need of an authoritative interpreter, why should we not recognize the need in the case of a divine document?

The multitude of contradictory creeds in the Christian world today is proof that the Scrip-

tures call for a divinely constituted and infallible interpreter. It may be said that the Scriptures, privately interpreted, have helped many to an upright life. That is because they are indeed the word of God. A poem, a story may inspire a man; much more may the sacred narrative.

But although one may read the Bible for a year or years without experiencing difficulty, one may at any time meet a passage which causes perplexity, which, if its right meaning is known, gives peace. Moreover, to a superficial reader, the Scriptures present contradictions which disappear when one knows the manners, circumstances and language of the period in question.

There is not a single contradiction in all Scripture when it is understood properly. Nor is there a single contradiction to science in all Scripture when Scripture and true science are in question. If there were one real contradiction in all Scripture, either to other parts of Scripture or to true science, the whole Bible would be unreliable and incapable of being the inspired word of God.

Half the truth is often the greatest lie. Partial knowledge of science is often the greatest ignorance and error. The Church which gave us the Bible welcomes scientific investigation,

but it must be scientific, not pseudo-scientific. The more light thrown on the Church, the better, but it must be the white light of truth, not the colored light of fancy or false science.

The Bible, as interpreted by the Church which compiled it and declared it inspired, will stand as long as this world lasts. Christ has said it. It thus becomes, as the gift of Christ's Church, a foundation for our faith in God, our hope in His promises, our charity in His service, and our union with Him as members of the divine family in God's everlasting home of peace, joy and love.

The Virgin Birth is, I repeat, a test case of the miraculous. That is why it is now being assailed. Modernists may fancy that only now is the light of keen analysis being thrown on the Bible. They forget that there were sceptics in the early days of Christianity. They forget that millions embraced the faith when to do so meant confiscation of property, loss of liberty, torture and loss of life. Those millions were not different from the men of today. Rather they were more sceptical, because so much depended on their acceptance of Christianity.

The great Augustine, one of the most scientific thinkers of all time, exclaimed that the establishment of Christianity without miracles was

a greater miracle than the Resurrection itself. And the Christianity of his day and of Apostolic days included the Virgin Birth. St. Ignatius, in the year 98, only a few years after Christ's days on earth, preached the Virgin Birth, as may be seen from authentic documents.

Those who say that this doctrine owes its origin to a time centuries after Christ have not read the incontestable documents of the first ages of the Church. There is nothing more unscientific than the judicial pronouncements of so-called modern scientific critics. The pity of it is that, the wish being father to the thought, so many are led astray by leaders who proclaim a creed which permits every man to be his own legislator.

Christianity is not altogether dependent on external proof for its verity. Its appeal to the noblest sentiments of mankind shows that it is from the Creator. Its answer to all the needs of the heart of man declares its divine authorship. Its basic doctrine, the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man, proclaims it to be from heaven. Its wonderful mysteries, the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Eucharist, could never have been excogitated by the mind of man, nor, if excogitated, obtain acceptance among mankind by any merely human power.

Miracles? Christianity is a miracle or nothing. Christ Himself is the greatest of miracles, even if we leave out His marvelous deeds. He Himself—His character, life, words—are the greatest miracle. Instead of being surprised at miracles concerning Christ, we should be surprised if there were none. Miracles were as natural in His case as walking or talking is in ours. Some there are who say that nature's laws admit of no exception. As though the Almighty made something mightier than Himself!

To sum up, let me say that no Church is Christ's which is not authoritative. Christ spoke with finality and authority. So must His Church. No church of Reformation origin may rightly speak with authority, because its origin was based on the rejection of authority. On the other hand, they who reject the miraculous deny the supernatural, thereby proclaiming themselves a merely human organization. Their creed is just what they choose to make it. It is man-made, not divine, and has no divine sanction and no reason for existence as a religion, since it cannot speak authoritatively to conscience or give certainty to hope.

Science is experimental and, therefore, changes. Jesus Christ is the Son of God and is

not experimental, but eternal Truth. Therefore His religion has not changed, but is the same forever. Hence His Church has never changed its creed and never will. Error changes, truth never. It is not a surrender of reason to trust to an accredited guide. The Church of Christ is God's accredited representative on earth. He has said it: "He who hears you hears me." Truth, though fixed, is not inert. It is the most dynamic thing on earth. Christian civilization is proof. Christ was not experimental, but eternal truth.

MIRACLES

As the Virgin Birth is necessarily associated with miracle, and as miracle is declared to be an impossibility by the opponents of the Virgin Birth, it is imperative to consider the subject of the miraculous. It may be said at the outset that if miracle be an impossibility, Christianity is also an impossibility as a religion of truth, since Christianity claims to be a revelation from heaven, such a revelation being based on miracle.

Christianity is a revealed religion. So states St. Paul, who of all men should know what Christianity was. "I give you to understand that the Gospel which was preached by me is not according to man, for neither did I receive it of man, nor did I learn it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. I. 11, 12). Again he says: "We give thanks to God without ceasing because that when you had received of us the word of the hearing of God, you received it not as the word of men, but as it is indeed the Word of God" (I Thess. II. 13).

Christ Himself, the founder of Christianity, declared it was a revelation: "All things are delivered to me by my Father, and no one knoweth the Son but the Father, neither doth any one know the Father but the Son, and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal him" (Matt. XI. 27). Moreover, Christ specifically declares that His mission on earth was to reveal God to the world: "Now this is eternal life: that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, and now glorify thou me, O Father, with thyself, with the glory which I had before the world was, with thee. . . . Because the words which thou gavest me, I have given to them; and they have received them, and have known in very deed that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me" (John, XVII. 3, 4, 5, 8).

I have quoted at length in order to show that Christianity and revelation are inseparable. If anyone should be authorized to declare the nature of Christianity, it is its Founder, Jesus Christ, and its chief convert and missioner, St. Paul.

Paul not only proclaimed Christianity—he died for it. He was its fiercest persecutor, but

became its most ardent apostle. He is considered by scholars to be one of the most intellectual men of all time. Hence, living at the very birth of Christianity, no one is better able to define it. He laid down his life in torture for his testimony, so we may believe he was sincere. He was no fanatic, as is evident from his writings. Sincere, learned, unbiased, there is no better witness in all history.

As between St. Paul and the most learned modern critic there is no choice. Paul was on the ground. He was perfectly equipped mentally and morally to state the truth of the situation. In any court of law, his would be unimpeachable testimony. Two thousand years after the Gospel facts, critics might surmise this or that. Paul, on the spot, did not surmise—he saw, he knew.

Now the point is this: Christianity is either a revelation or a rhapsody. A rhapsody never endured twenty centuries, or built up the highest civilization, or produced the heroism of the early martyrs, or the no less splendid heroism of the saintly followers of Christ all down the ages. So if Christianity is anything, it is a revelation.

Now revelation is based on miracle, because

it supposes some sign from God that it is indeed from Him.

Miracle is derived from the Latin word *miraculum,* from *mirari,* to wonder. The Bible means by *miracles* wonders of a peculiar kind, performed by supernatural power, as signs of some special mission or gift, and explicitly ascribed to God.

Thus St. Peter speaks of Christ as "approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs" (Acts II. 22).

St. Paul gives his credentials as God's ambassador by saying, "The signs of my apostleship have been wrought in all patience, in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds" (2 Cor. XII. 12).

Jesus constantly appealed to His "works" to prove that He was sent by God, and that He is the Son of God (Matt. XI. 4; John X. 37; Mark XVI. 17).

The Apostles appeal to miracles as the confirmation of Christ's divinity and mission (John XX. 31; Acts X. 38).

Revelation is thus necessarily associated with miracle.

It is possible for a person to convince himself that a miracle is an impossibility, but that such a person can consistently believe in Christianity is a logical impossibility. Rationalists, material-

ists, infidels are at least consistent. They reject Christianity altogether. But they who deny the miraculous and uphold Christianity are like a man trying to carry water in a pail without a bottom.

Since, therefore, Christianity is necessarily associated with the miraculous, we shall briefly consider the question of miracles. Let us begin by defining a miracle. The Century Dictionary states that "A miracle is an effect in nature not attributable to any of the recognized operations of nature, nor to the act of man, but indicative of superhuman power, and serving as a sign or witness thereof; a wonderful work manifesting a power superior to the ordinary forces of nature."

If by superhuman power is meant divine power, and if the effect produced is a sign or witness of divine power, this definition accords substantially with that of the theologians. Aquinas in his treatise on miracles says: "Those effects are rightly to be termed miracles which are wrought by divine power apart from the order usually observed in nature" (*Contra Gent.* III. cii).

A miracle may be called the sign-language of God. It is one of His ways of approving and confirming those who represent Him. A mir-

acle is the divine seal on a message or messenger from God to man.

This accords with what we find in the Gospel of St. John, III. 2: "Rabbi, we know that thou art come a teacher from God; for no man can do these signs which thou dost unless God be with him." Thus spoke Nicodemus to Christ. Christ Himself confirms this definition by His statement to those who were astounded by the magnitude of His claims: "Do you say: Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not" (John X. 36).

As a miracle effects something out of the ordinary course of nature, it implies interference with nature, and this is what causes the opponents of the miraculous to deny the possibility of miracles. They say that nature's course admits of no exception or interference, therefore a miracle is an impossibility.

We hope to demonstrate that there is a spiritual power in the universe superior to the powers and laws of nature, and to which all creation is subject. The demonstration takes the following form:

The whole material universe is under law. Law supposes a law-giver. The vast firmament, as well as the smallest atom, is governed by law,

as every scientist knows. Material elements always act in the same way under the same circumstances. Who imposed that law on them? Not themselves. Things material cannot bind and limit themselves. Yet all material creation is limited and bound absolutely. Matter is governed by laws as an engine is by mechanism. The power that invents and constructs an engine is superior to it and outside of it. The universe is a vast engine operating in a most orderly manner. It is a most perfectly coordinated mechanism.

What power coordinated the stupendous forces of the universe? Coordination implies intelligence, foresight, design. Matter has none of these qualities. Therefore the material world postulates a superior power endowed with intelligence. Evolution does not explain the cause of things. Evolution itself requires explanation, for what determined evolution's orderly processes?

The wonderful design and adaptation manifested not only in infinitesimally minute creatures, but also in the immensity of the firmament, and in cosmic unity, attest proximately the existence of a supramundane mind of vast intelligence, and ultimately the existence of an infinitely intelligent power or first cause.

Evolution, if it be a fact, is but one phase of

the marvelous purpose, foresight and adaptation manifested in the universe.

"The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth the work of his hands" (Ps. XVIII. 1).

The regular course of the stars, calculated with such geometrical precision; the mechanism which sets all their immense expanse of beauty in motion; the variety of the myriads of worlds flying through space together with the unity of their multitudinous activities caused Newton to term the author of the universe "The Great Mechanic, the Great Geometrician."

"One and the same power directs the course of the heavens and the varied movements of earth, and accounts for the stability of the whole amidst incalculable motion. Without an all-ruling Mind it would be impossible to account for those gigantic spheres traversing the limitless voids of space with appalling speed and unceasing gyrations.

"They follow their course in a complicated network of orbits and various movements. The force which guides them is so gentle that they seem to us to be balanced like lamps in the sky.

"Here then we have the perfection of regularity ruling matter, subjecting it to fixed laws.

We have the stars, whose distance and size amaze us, yet whose movements are better regulated than the most perfect clock. We must necessarily recognize a Power ruling the universe as we reflect on the myriads of worlds sailing noiselessly in regular order, describing most perfect orbits, revolving on themselves and round each other in empty space" (Picard, *Christianity or Agnosticism*).

Intelligence and plan and power must direct these numberless hosts. What gave the first impulse to all this orderly movement? There must be a prime mover of all this regulated motion. But marvelous as is the firmament, the tiniest things of earth reveal themselves as great wonders. Infinitesimally small things disclose depths that cannot be fathomed. The microscope, as well as the telescope, reveals a world which demands an intelligent and all-powerful Designer. Place one drop of stagnant water under a powerful microscope and you will find a multitude of infusoria equivalent in number to all the human beings upon earth. The smallest insect reveals a perfection of organization and adaptation which astonishes us.

And when we consider that the firmament, the earth, animal and vegetal life and inanimate nature all play a harmonious part in the great

drama of the universe, we must recognize a Master Spirit directing all.

Voltaire, who certainly cannot be suspected of bias in the matter, said: "If a clock proves the existence of a clock-maker, and the world does not prove the existence of a Supreme Architect, I consent to be called a fool."

Newton, after having explained the laws of light and its undulations, asked himself whether the eye could have been made by one who was without any knowledge of optics, and the ear by one without knowledge of the laws of sound. "You conclude," said he, "that I possess an intelligent soul because you perceive a certain order in my words and thoughts. Judge then when you see the order and regularity existing in the world that a being sovereignly intelligent must exist" (*Elements of Philosophy,* Part I, Chap. I).

Newton is one of the master minds of science. After his pronouncement science surely need not hesitate to admit an intelligent Author and Director of an intelligently governed universe. The harmony of living beings on our planet with the earth that nourishes and the heavens that give them light affords evidence of plan and intention. Only a conscious and intelligent being can form an intention. This was evident

to the sage of old. "All men are vain in whom there is not the knowledge of God, and who by these good things that are seen could not understand him that is, neither by attending to the works have acknowledged the workmen" (Wisdom XIII. 1).

The Psalmist voices the same idea: "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? or he that formed the eye doth he not see?" (Ps. XCIII. 9).

St. Paul employs the same reasoning when he affirms "The invisible things of him, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also, and divinity, so that they are inexcusable" (Rom. I. 20).

The wise men of antiquity spoke in like manner: "When a man came to proclaim the existence of an intelligence which is the cause of the order and regularity that appear throughout the world, he left the impression of being the only one possessed of his senses" (*Metaphysics,* Bk. I. C. III).

It is then from an intelligent Being that all these laws which rule the world flow. Law connotes a law-giver. The universe, being under law, is, therefore, subject to a law-giver. Hence, there is an intellectual power over and

above the material and law-bound universe. This power is either the first cause or postulates eventually a first cause which must be uncaused, always existent, eternal. This ultimate power or final cause we call the First Cause, the Eternal, the Almighty, the Creator, God.

From this First Cause came everything that exists. The material universe, being under law, is subject to some superior power and hence is dependent upon that power. It is not, therefore, self-existent because what is self-existent is not dependent. Therefore, it has not of itself its capacity of action and development. Hence, matter does not of itself explain the universe but demands an intelligent power above it which gave it its orderly and purposeful processes.

The chief thing to bear in mind is that matter is under law, that what is under law is dependent, and that what is dependent is not self-existent, and that consequently matter of itself does not afford an explanation of things. Materialists, therefore, have no logical basis for their position.

But what has all this to do with miracles? Everything. God, being the First Cause of all creation, possesses potentially all the perfection and power of the universe. This is evident from the fact that no one can give what he has not.

Before Edison makes a device of any kind, he has already originated it in his mind. That is, he has it potentially in himself. The next step is to give actual shape to his mental conception. Edison cannot make anything greater than himself. Neither can God. Hence, God is master of His creation. If He were not, He would not be infinite, because He would be limited or restricted by something outside Himself. *Infinite* means absolutely no restriction. Hence God is master of all creation.

The objection to miracles is that they imply interference with nature's course. The One who made the material universe and gave it its laws has not renounced control of it. The very meaning of Providence is governance. Unless God can interfere at will with His own world, there is no governance, nothing but blind, irresistible force.

It may be objected that a miracle would halt nature's course, disrupt the mechanism of creation. Not if the Master of creation Himself interferes. It is certainly a smaller thing to interfere with the universe than to make it. A master designer of a vast and complicated engine, such as we may see in some of our great factories, may interfere with the mechanism without hurt or hindrance to its work, whereas

a looker-on could not do so without shattering it.

In thinking of God, we are almost obliged to do so in the same way as we do of created things, but in reality, we can not comprehend His incomprehensible nature. With us everything is past, present or future. With God, it is all *now.* A man with a field-glass in an airplane can see at one glance a roadway miles and miles in extent. A motorist on the road can see but a short distance, and a pedestrian less. The road in front and to the rear is future and past to those on it, but to the airman it is all present.

In some such way, all is *now* with God. He exists in eternity, where there is no *was* or *will be,* but all actually *is.* Hence He sees mightily from end to end. He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, everything down to the last day is before Him. When He created and regulated the universe, He did so once for all, foreseeing all contingencies and making every provision.

Huxley, without intending it, echoed this idea of God when he said: "The definition of a miracle as a *violation* of the laws of nature is, in reality, an employment of language which, in the face of the matter, cannot be justified" (Huxley-Hume, p. 129). A miracle is the violation of nothing. It is the assertion of power over

nature by the Author of nature. An example will help to make this evident. Of course every comparison halts when applied to God. The following illustration is not by any means a miracle, nor does it indicate anything supernatural, but is intended merely to show that a miracle need not be a violation of nature's laws.

A miracle is beyond human power to effect, but not beyond the power of Him who is all-knowing and all-powerful. Now for the illustration:

If a civil engineer should go to South Africa to construct a railroad there and should find it necessary to remove a mountain which lay in the very place where a terminal was required, the natives might say that it could not be done, or that it would take a hundred thousand men a thousand years or more to do it. And, with their limited knowledge and crude implements, they would be right. But the engineer, knowing the power of dynamite and the efficacy of modern excavating machinery, would reply that it could be done in a year or so. What to them would be an impossibility would be feasible to him with his superior knowledge and with the stupendous power at his command. As the use of dynamite is not a violation of nature's laws, so a miracle is not necessarily a violation

of nature's laws, but the use and direction of them by Him who alone has the full knowledge and control of nature.

Another comparison may bring this home more graphically. If a savage were blind by reason of cataract of the eyes it would seem to him and his people that restoration to sight would be impossible. And so it would be in their condition and circumstances. But a skilled surgeon by a dexterous operation could restore vision to the blind man. The surgeon by his superior knowledge and skill could do what would be impossible to the savage.

God, the Author of nature, knows how to employ her forces to accomplish what is impossible except to His knowledge and power.

Hence Channing says: "Miracles are the acts and manifestations of a Spiritual Power in the universe, superior to the powers and laws of matter" (*Perfect Life,* p. 248). A miracle is not, therefore, a breaking of nature's laws, but the adjustment of them to a special purpose by Him who is the Author of them. In other words, a miracle is the sign-language of God. That is why Christ appealed to it as proof that He was the true Son of God, very God of God. As an instance let me ask you to open your Bible

to the ninth chapter of St. Matthew, where you will read as follows:

"And entering into a boat he passed over the water and came into his own city. And behold they brought unto him one sick of the palsy lying in a bed. And Jesus seeing their faith said to the man sick of the palsy: Be of good heart, son, thy sins are forgiven thee. And behold some of the scribes said within themselves: He blasphemeth. And Jesus seeing their thoughts said: Why do you think evil in your hearts? Whether is easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee: or to say arise and walk? But that you may know that the son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (then said he to the man sick of the palsy) Arise take up thy bed and go into thy house. And he arose and went into his house. And the multitude seeing it feared and glorified God" (Matt. IX. 1-9).

Hardly any event in the life of Christ illustrates so well the nature and purpose of a miracle as this cure of the paralytic. Christ was exercising a prerogative of Almighty God when He said to the cripple, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." None but God can directly forgive sin. Here Christ directly proclaims forgiveness of sin to the man lying helpless before Him. The Jews understood the significance of Christ's act. They

knew that He was claiming and exercising a power which pertained to Jehovah alone. Without protesting aloud they said in their hearts that He was guilty of blasphemy in thus usurping divine authority. Being very God He knew their thoughts. Knowing their exalted idea of Jehovah He made allowance for their consternation at His claims and the exercise of them. Consequently He proceeded to convince them of the truth of His claims. He agreed with them that only God could forgive sin. He admitted that it would be blasphemous for anyone but God to attempt to exercise such power. Then he proceeded to show that He was God, Jehovah, by doing directly something which only God could do. Any one could say to another, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." But only God could by a word directly and instantly heal a paralytic. In saying, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," there was no evidence to the by-standers that the man's sins were forgiven. Yet if He should say to the cripple before him, "Arise, take up thy bed and go into thy house," there would be evidence of divine power if the man should do as bidden. Jesus accordingly turned to the multitude and said equivalently, "You accuse me of blasphemy because I say to this man that his sins are forgiven. You accuse me of usurp-

ing the power of Jehovah, to whom alone it belongs to forgive sin directly. If I am not God you are right. None but God can forgive sin directly. But in order to show you that I am God I am going to do what God alone can do. When I said to this man, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee,' there was no evidence to show that they were forgiven. But if I say to this cripple, 'Arise and walk,' the effect will be evident. If I am God my words will have the power of God, and at my command this paralytic will be instantly and absolutely healed. Now therefore that you may believe that my words were those of God in pronouncing forgiveness I will say to this man, 'Arise and walk.' If I am God he will respond to my power and you will know by this sign that I am not a blasphemer but what I claim to be, the Son of God, for Jehovah alone can do this wondrous thing and he would not do it to confirm falsehood or blasphemy." Then as the multitude waited in awe He looked down upon the helpless man and said with power, "I say to thee arise." And because it was God who spoke the cripple leapt to his feet, sound and whole. The result was that a great fear came upon the multitude. They realized that they were in the presence of divinity and glorified God. In this instance the cure of the

paralytic was a sign from above confirming Christ's mission. It was a sign from above because it was something beyond human power, something pertaining to God alone. It was a confirmation of Christ's claims, because it was the sign-language of the Almighty corroborating the words of His Son.

We see another instance of the same kind in the resurrection of Lazarus. This was one of Christ's greatest miracles.

Lazarus had been dead four days when Christ came to the tomb. Corruption had set in, for Martha said to Jesus, "He stinketh." This she said when she perceived that He was going to raise Lazarus. She evidently thought that her brother was too long dead even for the power of Jesus to resuscitate. There was a large concourse of people about the tomb as Jesus approached it. Among them were scribes and Pharisees who were hostile to Him. They stood in bewilderment and awe as they beheld Him in solemn attitude as if He were about to command death. Seeing their amazement, He took occasion of the great deed He was about to perform to confirm His claims and to have heaven sanction His mission.

Raising His eyes to His heavenly Father He declared that He was going to do this deed of

supernatural power as proof of His divine mission: "That they may believe that thou hast sent me." Then in a loud voice He said, "Lazarus, come forth!" The corpse, at the voice of its Creator, leapt to life and Jesus gave the living Lazarus to his sisters.

Observe that Christ in performing this miracle did it as a confirmation of His claims. He claimed to be the true Son of God, equal in all things to the eternal Father. His mission was to be the Light of the world, proclaiming to mankind the way to eternal life. In order to persuade the people that He was what He asserted Himself to be, He had to give proof. Hence, in the resurrection of Lazarus He appealed to a sign from heaven that He was what He claimed to be: "That they may know that thou hast sent me." The sign from heaven was given, the corpse at the word of Jesus sprang to life, and the multitude accordingly glorified God.

It may be asked, Why did the people not accept Christ and His claims? The people at large did accept Him. So true was this that the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said: "What do we, for this man doth many miracles? If we let him alone so, all will believe in him" (John XI. 47, 48). Why these

leaders rejected Him will be explained in a chapter further on, entitled, "Christ and the Rationalists of His own Day."

Having declared the nature and purpose of miracles, let us now consider some of the objections urged against the miraculous. All the objections center about one main idea; namely, that there can be no interference with the course of nature.

To say that interference with nature's course is an impossibility is to show a misconception of nature. Nature is not a god. Nature is not an absolute monarch. Nature is the Creator's handiwork. Nature has no volition. It always acts as its Author has determined. That is why it is so blind. It is like a horse blindfolded but guided around a track by a driver. Some speak of nature as being omnipotent, yet deny that it can alter its course—a contradiction, one of many in this matter.

Now I hope by an example to demonstrate that miracles are possible, and by facts to show that they have occurred. The standard objection to a miracle is that nature's laws permit of no exception. It is contended that the material forces of the world act in a fixed and predetermined manner.

Granted that this is so, these material forces

may by a superior power be directed or applied in such way that they effect results which are not fixed or predetermined. "Thus a boy by throwing a stone into the air, does not disarrange the order of nature or do away with the law of gravity. A new force only is brought in and counteracts the tendencies of the natural forces. The analogy from man's act to God's is complete as far as concerns a break in the uniformity of nature or a violation of its laws. The extent of the power exerted does not affect the point at issue. Hence physical nature is presented as a system of physical causes producing uniform results, and yet permits the interposition of personal agency without affecting its stability" (*Catholic Encyclopedia,* "Miracle" [4]).

To make this clear, let me give a few instances which show, not a violation of nature's laws, but an interference in nature's course by a superior power which itself was free to act or not to act. In other words, I propose to show that an intelligent and free cause may, without violating nature's laws, bring about results which material nature of itself would not have effected.

Suppose a hunter lights a forest fire. An effect is produced which the ordinary course of nature did not necessarily effect. The hunter

was obliged by no physical determination to cause the conflagration. Here is a case of interference. That raging fire was not the effect solely of fixed physical laws, but of the voluntary act of man as well. A readjustment was required in a thousand details in consequence of the free act of an outside force.

Of course I know that once the fire was started, it progressed and destroyed according to the laws of fire, etc. But that is not the point. That fire was not *started* by *necessary* action of physical forces.

Every time those furnace fires at Pittsburgh are lighted, creating artificial volcanoes, there is an interference with predetermined nature's course. By no natural and necessary power are those blast furnaces ignited, and yet what a stupendous physical alteration they effect in various ways! The Panama Canal was not the necessary result of physical forces, but of the volition of a nation, something absolutely independent of predetermination. And may not the Creator interfere with His own?

Perhaps I may make it clearer by another illustration: A man in perfect health is walking along the street. Being physically sound, he may be said to be certain to reach his destination. A mechanic is mending a roof as this man passes

by. The roofer sees the man below and recognizes him as his deadliest enemy. He designedly and intentionally and freely lets drop directly over his enemy a huge piece of metal, which crushes the skull of the man in the street. There is an interference with nature's course. That man's skull, naturally, by the ordinary processes of nature, would not have fractured.

A crowd gathers, an ambulance is called, the victim is hurried to the hospital. I, a friend of the man, see the accident, jump into the ambulance with police and doctor, and as we are rushed to the hospital, I ask the doctor if the man has a chance. "Just a bare chance, if we can operate within ten minutes." The driver has been instructed to go at top speed, as a life hangs in the balance. In and out he dodges, letting out his machine to its limit, everybody making way as the clang of the gong rings out frantically.

In less than four minutes, the man is on the operating table. What brought him there? Not the fixed laws of nature, but outside volition on the part of all who cooperated. It was interference. The fixed laws of nature, if left to themselves, would have resulted in the man's lying on the spot where he fell and slowly dying as the effect of the normal processes of fracture.

But now he is on the operating table. If left there, he will die. The surgeon comes in. He is free to operate or not. He may think it useless, or again, he may say there is a possible chance. However, if he decides to operate, it is because he wills to do so, not because he is physically forced to it. He operates. By a few skilful cuts and adjustments, he removes a death-causing clot of blood, which natural processes would never have removed. The patient recovers; he is restored, a father and husband, to his family. Intelligent interference with nature by a superior power, for the man that operated was superior to the matter he cut and adjusted and free to do so or not.

Man, a power superior to matter, by reason of free will and intelligence, interferes with the orderly processes of nature's course, creates conditions which set nature to work anew, arrests the destruction set in by nature's processes of dissolution, and, as a result, a fatally injured man recovers. By nature's predetermined processes, that man had necessarily died, but the hand of a skilled fellow man interfered and saved.

This is by no means a miracle, since the operation was something done by natural or human power, but it illustrates what a miracle

postulates, namely, the voluntary interference with the normal processes of nature by a superior power.

Shall we deny to the Creator a power over nature which we concede in a measure to one of His creatures? Surely Almighty God, who knows the human frame, at least as well as a surgeon, can by His own adjustments effect conditions favorable to the working of nature's salutary laws. And surely Almighty God can do instantly what it took the surgeon and recuperative nature a long time to accomplish. By the knife, the surgeon simply put nature in a condition to do her work of recuperation. He did not violate any law of nature by his surgery, but simply facilitated nature's work by doing what nature of herself was incapable of doing.

So a miracle does not postulate a *violation of nature's laws*. This, by way of answer to those who object to divine interference on the ground of violation of physical law.

But in point of fact, God may, if He wish, violate nature's law, for what is nature's law but the expression of God's will in creation? God is master of His own will, and may alter His laws at will. Again I remind the reader that we must keep before us the fact that with God there is no past or future. With our limited

intelligence, it is hard to grasp this idea. For some it is impossible. But it is metaphysically certain that with God everything is *now*.

Christ Himself assures us of this by His statement: "Before Abraham was made, I am." This was not only a declaration of Christ's divinity, but also an assertion that with God it is not *was* nor *will be,* but *is*. All is *now* with God. This, as I have said, is an idea which average intelligence can but feebly comprehend. Yet we would comprehend God Himself!

When we speak of God's violating nature's laws, we are merely using words. God cannot violate His own will. Nature is an external manifestation of God's will and power. Nature is just what God wants it to be, nothing more nor less. Nature in a certain sense may be said to be God in external action.

Consequently, in a miracle, God does not have to transgress nature's law at all, except in our way of expressing it. Hence, Hume's definition is philosophically incorrect: "A miracle may be accurately defined a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent" (*Human Understanding,* Chap. X, note). A miracle may be popularly so defined, but not

accurately, for the reason that the Creator does not transgress His own laws.

Now that we have stated the case with regard to the possibility of miracles, how about the fact of miracles? Have there been miracles? In answer to this, I may say that since a miracle, if it occur, must be a visible fact, we can establish its verity or prove its falsity as we can any other fact in history.

Here let me say that the best established facts of history are those recorded in the Gospels. I say this not as a churchman, but merely give the verdict of the greatest living scholars and critics. The Gospels were not written in the hazy long-ago. They were given to mankind at the most matter-of-fact period of the world's history. They are of the same era as Cæsar, Cicero, Juvenal, Tacitus, *et al.* As a historical document, the Gospels are much better attested than Cæsar's *Commentaries* or the *Annals* of Tacitus. This is the verdict of the world's best scholars.

There were never such critics and sceptics as abounded in the days of the Gospel narrative. As an instance, let me ask you to read carefully the following record of the cure of the blind man at the pool of Siloe:

"And Jesus passing by, saw a man, who was blind from his birth: And his disciples asked

him: Rabbi, who hath sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind? Jesus answered: Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, whilst it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

"When he had said these things, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and spread the clay upon his eyes, And said to him: Go, wash in the pool of Siloe, which is interpreted, Sent. He went therefore, and washed, and he came seeing.

"The neighbors therefore, and they who had seen him before that he was a beggar, said: Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said: This is he. But others said: No, but he is like him. But he said: I am he. They said therefore to him: How were thy eyes opened? He answered: That man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me: Go to the pool of Siloe, and wash. And I went, I washed, and I see. And they said to him: Where is he? He saith: I know not.

"They bring him that had been blind to the Pharisees. Now it was the sabbath, when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Again

therefore the Pharisees asked him, how he had received his sight. But he said to them: He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and I see.

"Some therefore of the Pharisees said: This man is not of God, who keepeth not the sabbath. But others said: How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. They say therefore to the blind man again: What sayest thou of him that hath opened thy eyes? And he said: He is a prophet.

"The Jews then did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and had received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight, And asked them, saying: Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then doth he now see? His parents answered them, and said: We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: But how he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: ask himself: he is of age, let him speak for himself.

"These things his parents said, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had already agreed among themselves, that if any man should confess him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore did his parents say: He is of age, ask himself.

"They therefore called the man again that

had been blind, and said to him: Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner. He said therefore to them: If he be a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. They said then to him: What did he to thee? How did he open thy eyes? He answered them: I have told you already, and you have heard: why would you hear it again? will you also become his disciples?

"They reviled him therefore, and said: Be thou his disciple; but we are the disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses: but as to this man, we know not from whence he is. The man answered, and said to them: Why, herein is a wonderful thing, that you know not from whence he is, and he hath opened my eyes. Now we know that God doth not hear sinners: but if a man be a server of God, and doth his will, him he heareth. From the beginning of the world it hath not been heard, that any man hath opened the eyes of one born blind. Unless this man were of God, he could not do any thing. They answered, and said to him: Thou wast wholly born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out: and when he had found him, he said to him: Dost thou believe in the Son of God? He answered,

and said: Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him? And Jesus said to him: Thou hast both seen him; and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said: I believe, Lord. And falling down, he adored him.

"And Jesus said: For judgment I am come into this world; that they who see not, may see; and they who see, may become blind. And some of the Pharisees, who were with him, heard: and they said unto him: Are we also blind? Jesus said to them: If you were blind, you should not have sin: but now you say: We see. Your sin remaineth" (John, IX).

It is doubtful if in the whole history of human occurrences can be found a more critical investigation into a fact than what is here briefly presented. It is also a very good illustration of the attitude of present day unbelievers in the miraculous. They shut their eyes to evidence and deny what they do not care to admit.

We are inclined to deny the possibility of whatever we do not want to acknowledge. Men who have committed themselves to a denial of the supernatural hate to reverse themselves. That is one reason why the opponents of the supernatural will not yield to evidence which, in other matters, they would consider conclusive and compulsory. Moreover, to acknowl-

edge the supernatural implies the reign of God's law among mankind, or else to suffer the consequences of defying Deity. Man wants to be a law to himself. Thus he resents interference with his own will and ways, and is only too apt to look for every loophole to escape the acknowledgment of the supernatural.

Hence, in matters of revelation, he applies a rule and method which are foreign to his other activities. But Christ said that in praying to God, our Father, we should say, "*Thy* will be done." Men like to say, "*My* will be done." Therefore, they often refuse to see because they do not want to see. But to you I present the following facts in hopes that you want the truth.

On December 17, 1899, the fast mail on the way from Bordeaux to Paris met with a collision. In the mail car was a post office express clerk, Gabriel Gargan, thirty years old. At the time of the wreck the train was going at a speed of fifty miles an hour. Gargan was thrown fifty five feet by the crash. He was terribly bruised and broken, and paralyzed from the waist down. He was barely alive when lifted onto a stretcher.

Taken to a hospital, his existence for some time was a living death. After eight months he had wasted away to a mere skeleton, weighing but seventy eight pounds, although normally a

large man. His feet became gangrenous. He could take no solid food and was obliged to receive nourishment by a tube. Only once in twenty four hours could he be fed even that way.

He brought suit for damages against the railway. They tried to compromise by paying him three thousand francs annually as long as he lived, but he declined the offer, and brought the case to the courts. After weighing all the evidence under the scrutiny of the corporation's lawyers, the court gave a verdict in his favor of six thousand francs annually, and besides, an indemnity of sixty thousand francs. The railroad brought the case to the appellate court. This tribunal confirmed the verdict of the former court, and the case was ended.

Gargan's condition was pitiable in the extreme. He could not help himself even in the most trifling needs. Two trained nurses were needed day and night to assist him. That was Gabriel Gargan as he was after the accident, and as he would evidently continue to be until death relieved him. About his desperate condition there could be no doubt. The railroad fought the case on every point. There was no room for deception or hearsay. Two courts attested to his condition, and the final payment

by the railroad left the case a matter of record. Doctors testified that the man was a hopeless cripple for life, and their testimony was not gain-said.

Previous to the accident, Gargan had not been to church for fifteen years. His aunt, who was a nun of the Order of the Sacred Heart, now begged him to go to Lourdes. He refused. She continued her appeals to him. He was deaf to all her prayers.

After twenty months in the hospital, the surgeons advised an operation, but he would not consent to it. The doctors told him that he would die otherwise. "Then let me die," he said, and asked to be brought home that he might die amidst his family. At home, his mother pleaded with him to go to Lourdes. He would not heed her. Finally, to satisfy her, he agreed to go.

It was now nearly two years since the accident, and not for a moment had he left his bed all that time. He was carried on a stretcher to the train. The exertion caused him to faint and for a full hour he was unconscious. They were on the point of abandoning the pilgrimage, as it looked as if he would die on the way, but the mother insisted, and the journey was made.

Arrived at Lourdes, he went to confession and

received holy Communion. There was no change in his condition. Later he was carried to the miraculous pool and tenderly placed in its waters. No effect. Rather, a bad effect resulted, for the exertion threw him into a swoon and he lay apparently dead. After a time, as he did not revive, they thought him dead. Sorrowfully they wheeled the carriage back to the hotel. On the way back, they saw the procession of the Blessed Sacrament approaching. They stood aside to let it pass, having placed a cloth over the face of the man whom they supposed to be dead.

As the priest passed carrying the Sacred Host, he pronounced benediction over the sorrowful group around the covered body. Soon there was a movement from under the covering. To the amazement of the bystanders, the body raised itself to a sitting posture. While the family were looking on dumbfounded and the spectators gazed in amazement, Gargan cried out in a full strong voice that he wanted to get up.

They thought it was a delirium before death, and tried to soothe him, but he was not to be restrained. He got up, stood erect, walked a few paces, and said he was cured. The multitude looked on in wonder, and then fell on their knees and thanked God for this new sign of His power

at the shrine of His Blessed Mother. As Gargan had on him only invalid's clothes, he returned to the carriage and was wheeled back to the hotel. There he was soon dressed, and proceeded to walk about as if nothing had ever ailed him. For two years, no food had passed his lips, except by tube, and now he sat down to table and ate a hearty meal.

The news of the cure spread fast. Every one knew of his case. At the time of the lawsuit, the papers were filled with descriptions of his terrible and incurable injuries. His was a public case. In a short time, therefore, the doctors began to arrive and to investigate. Not one denied the fact of the cure. No one questioned his former incurable condition nor his present soundness. The records of the case were official and public from the day of the accident to the day of the instantaneous cure. It was a celebrated case. The doctors were nonplussed. Here was evidence upsetting all theories against the supernatural. They could not find a loophole. Many of the doctors bowed down and acknowledged the miraculous, but others remained blind, like the scribes and Pharisees on beholding the miracles of our Saviour.

It will be so to the end. But to the sincere and candid lover of truth, the evidence for the

supernatural is clear as day. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. But as many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in his name" (John, I).

On August 20, 1901, sixty prominent doctors examined Gargan. Without stating the nature of the cure, they pronounced him entirely cured. Gargan, out of gratitude to God and His Blessed Mother, consecrated himself to the service of the invalids at Lourdes.

Fifteen years after his miraculous cure, he was still engaged in his strenuous and devoted work. He was for years a living visible testimony of the supernatural. Lifting the helpless from their cots, aiding the cripples, ministering to the afflicted, he was to be seen day after day, a living miracle. He may be there yet, for I have not heard of his death, but millions have seen him, and millions knew what he was before he came to Lourdes.

Gentlemen of science, here is a miracle as well attested as anything your scientific investigations have established.

Zola saw with his own eyes cures equally marvelous. But, as with him the wish was father to the thought, he accepted the fact of the cures, but sought any and every explanation but the true one. Zola, after witnessing one of the greatest cures ever wrought at Lourdes, exclaimed: "I don't believe in miracles; even if all the sick in Lourdes were cured in one instant, I would not believe in miracles." This remark he made to Dr. Boissarie, the chief physician at Lourdes, who had given him every opportunity for making a scientific investigation of the cures wrought there. Scientists pride themselves on concluding solely from evidence. They seem to make an exception when the subject is something they have already passed judgment on without evidence.

With regard to miracles, let it be understood that the Church is more sceptical than are the most bitter opponents of the miraculous, but there is this difference: her scepticism is rational. She suspends judgment on a miracle, and seeks every possible natural explanation of it, not accepting it until the evidence for the miracle is so compelling that to deny it would be illogical.

It is doubtful if there exists today in any place in the world greater scepticism than is to

be found among the authorities that examine into the cures at Lourdes. Although there may be any number of genuine miracles wrought there, the authorities take cognizance of major ones only, those which are pronounced by medical men of all creeds or no creed to be naturally impossible of cure by human remedies.

We all know that there are a thousand and one ailments which may be cured by suggestion and other psychological treatments. Every physician may point to such cures in his own practice. So-called faith healers make capital of these cures, attributing them to a divine agency, whereas in truth they are nothing but mental therapeutics. But not such are the cures which the Church designates miracles. For instance, there can be no question of suggestion in the case of an infant, yet at Lourdes infants have been cured of incurable maladies. All the suggestion in the world will not cure a malignant cancer, yet victims of this dread disease have been cured instantaneously at Lourdes.

No cure is accepted there as miraculous unless the patient has been examined previous to the cure by most competent physicians, and afterwards declared by these same physicians to be entirely cured. Some of the diseases cured are here specified. The more one knows of disease

and medicine, the more will one appreciate the significance of this tabulation of diseases cured:

Cancer	Fracture
Intestinal perforation	Blindness
Bright's disease	Deafness
Floating kidney	Intestinal tuberculosis
Cerebral hemorrhage	Hip disease
Paresis	Lupus
Lateral curvature	Cancer of the bone
Caries of the spinal cord	

This list might be added to indefinitely, as nearly every disease known to mankind has been cured at Lourdes.

There is this circumstance to be noted in regard to these miracles, that they were effected in most cases instantaneously. Every human or natural cure requires time. The characteristic of miraculous cure is, in most cases, instantaneousness. In the case of Gargan, for example, an all but corpse came forth from the shroud to perfect health. I have said that miracles are the sign-language of God. Surely He has spoken at Lourdes.

I have specified Lourdes, not because it is there exclusively that miracles occur, but because there a scientific man may see scientific

proof of the miraculous. Miracles have abounded in the Church of Christ always. He is with His Church today as He was with the Apostles, when He gave sight to the blind, and made the crippled walk, and cleansed the leper, and gave back to the widowed mother of Naim her son that was dead, and to Martha and Mary their brother who was dead and buried. Christ Himself, although He convinced the scribes and Pharisees, did not convert them. Miracles today may convince but not convert those who prefer their own fallible and changeable guidance to the light of Eternal Truth.

Christ came on earth for one purpose only, to make us members of the heavenly family. He came to give us eternal life with Himself and His Father. Hence He said: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." He is not only the Way, but also the Light to guide us in the way. "I am the Light of the world." They who follow that Light shall terminate their earthly pilgrimage in the abode of Him whose presence is peace and joy everlasting. "We have not here a lasting city, but seek one that is to come."

Hence Christ, who brought a message from His Father, employed miracles, God's sign-language, in order that we might know that in

hearkening to Him we were listening to God, and that in following Him we were going to God. From time to time He employs even now the language of miracles to confirm our faith in Him, to increase our love for Him, and to bring us in the end to share with Him the eternal happiness He has prepared for all those who live this brief life as He wills. "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done."

When kings send a representative with orders to a prince or noble they stamp the document with their seal. Sometimes they send their sealring itself as proof that the messenger is from the king.

Christ came with a message from the King of kings. It was a vital message to mankind. It meant that they who received it should know that they were the sons of God by adoption. It meant also that they must live as children of God, doing good and avoiding evil. Man has a tendency to evil. It requires effort to resist this tendency. It demands sacrifice to follow reason rather than passion. Hence Christ's revelation, although promising membership in the divine family, specified that none but those who were worthy should be the children of the heavenly Father.

Such a message, demanding, as it did, not only

belief but an upright life, had need of God's seal on it for acceptance.

Hence Christ said: "If you do not believe me believe the works which I do." He gave sight to the blind, cleansed the leper, gave back to the widow of Naim her boy who was being carried to the grave, and restored to Martha and Mary their brother Lazarus, who was dead and buried.

These marvelous deeds were God's sign-language, indicating that Christ was what He claimed to be. Materialists deny the possibility of miracles because they say that nature's laws admit of no violation. Nature is God's servant. Nature's laws are not violated by miracles, any more than the orders of a general are violated if he makes exceptions in the orders he has issued. Any one who prays and at the same time denies miracles is guilty of mockery or stupidity. For prayer asks God's assistance. If everything was fixed by predetermined physical law, prayer would be useless, for God could not interfere. But Christ has taught us to pray. Hence He has taught us that miracles are not only possible but to be expected.

EVOLUTION

Some of those who deny the possibility of miracle, and consequently of the Virgin Birth, base their views on the postulates of Evolution. They affirm that evolution has discredited the Bible, and that in consequence the events therein narrated are not true. In view of this, it is necessary to consider evolution in connection with the Virgin Birth and miracles.

There is a rather widespread opinion that evolution is antagonistic to Christianity. Evolution as a scientific theory is not opposed to Christianity. Evolution as a scientific theory has had its strongest advocates among churchmen. Some of the most learned churchmen of Christendom have been ardent advocates of a scientific theory of evolution. In point of fact, the pioneers of evolution were Christian leaders of thought.

St. Augustine, fifteen hundred years ago, devoted years of study to a theory of evolution. He wrote a treatise on it which has come down to us, and which is a masterpiece of scientific thought. We shall quote from it presently.

St. Gregory of Nyssa, shortly before Augustine, and St. Basil, previous to Gregory, wrote learned treatises on a scientific theory of evolution. Both of these intellectual giants were stout advocates of a particular theory of evolution.

There is no antagonism between science and revealed religion. Whenever antagonism is declared, it is because either science or revealed religion has been falsely championed.

Some of the most distinguished scientists have been devout Christians. Pasteur is, possibly, the foremost of modern scientists. His name has given new words to language. We speak of *pasteurized* substances. There are laws obliging certain producers to pasteurize their goods. It was Pasteur who exploded by scientific proofs the age-long scientific dogma of spontaneous generation.

The French nation was recently called upon to declare who was its greatest man of all the ages. The nation's voice proclaimed Pasteur. There is no question of his scientific preeminence. Yet this man was as devout as a nun. Being questioned once on his faith, he said: "The more I know, the more is my faith that of the Breton peasant. Could I but know all, I would have the faith of a Breton peasant wo-

man." This man was the founder of physico-chemistry, father of bacteriology, inventor of bio-therapeutics. He died in the year 1895, thus belonging to our own time. He died with his rosary in his hand, after listening to the *Life of St. Vincent de Paul,* which he had asked to have read to him. If Pasteur found no conflict between science and Christianity, it was not because he was ignorant of either.

Another scientist, a real scientist, one who did not merely repeat formulæ of others, nor get his ideas from manuals or magazines or newspaper headlines, was Gregor Mendel. He too was a discoverer. He too has given a new word to language. When evolutionists discuss the problems of biology, they must necessarily take into account Mendelism. This scientist made thousands of experiments, finally deducing what is known in biology as Mendel's Law. Gregor Mendel was professor of physics for fifteen years in the Abbey of St. Thomas at Brünn. He was a priest, and afterwards became abbot of the monastery. Nearly all his experiments were in connection with a scientific theory of evolution. Surely for him there was no antagonism between science and religion.

One of the greatest authorities on biology to-

day is Erich Wasmann. The *Encyclopedia Americana* enumerates twenty two books of his which are to be found in nearly every scientific library of the world. He made over ten thousand experiments in the field of evolution, and has enriched the literature of evolution as much as any modern scientist. Wasmann finds no antagonism to Christianity in the scientific theory of evolution. He was a priest and a Jesuit. His contribution to science is real, as he had evidence for his conclusions. Wasmann never would have been an upholder of the scientific theory of evolution if there were antagonism between it and religion.

Another churchman who was a great scientist was the entomologist Fabre. He published over thirty volumes on zoology, and is the world's foremost authority on insects. He received the Nobel Prize, was honored by the French Academy, and decorated by the French government. His best work was done within the past twenty five years. He said: "You might as well try to take the skin off my body as to take away my faith." Another saying of his: "I do not *believe* in God, I *see* Him. Nature shows Him unmistakably."

Why, therefore, the alarm of some religious people about evolution? A man firing off a gun

with blank cartridges can create alarm, especially if he shouts out that it is loaded. But if one has the presence of mind to examine the gun, one will not be alarmed further. The alarm about evolution is due to the fact that some scientists are trying to use it as a weapon to attack revealed religion. It is as harmless against Christianity as a blank cartridge against a bank clerk. Yet many a bank clerk and many another have been victimized by an unloaded gun, or a similar device. Let us approach the gun of evolution and inspect it.

In the first place, Darwinism is not evolution, although it is not uncommon to hear people speak of Darwinism as evolution. It is only a phase of evolution. Darwinism has three distinct meanings: first, it is the theory of the origin of species by natural selection, or the survival of the fittest; secondly, it means man's descent from the monkey; and finally, popularly it means evolution.

The only genuine meaning of Darwinism is natural selection. It was the only Darwinism that Darwin taught. Darwinism in this sense, its only true sense, has been rejected by the leading scientists of the day. It is an exploded theory. In proof, I name the following distinguished men who have repudiated Darwinism:

Blanchard, Wigand, Wolff, Dreisch, Plate, Hertwig, Eimer, von Hartmann, Reinke.

Professor Romanes says: "At present it would be impossible to find any working naturalist who supposes that survival of the fittest is competent to explain all the phenomena of species formation" (*Journal of the Linnæan Society,* Vol. XIX). Professor Vines, in his presidential address to the Linnæan Society, May 24, 1902, concludes: "It is established that natural selection, though it may have perpetuated species, cannot have originated any." Finally, we have the statement of Bateson, which has virtually sounded the death-knell of Darwinism, meaning the survival of the fittest: "Darwin speaks no more with philosophic authority. We read his scheme of evolution as we would those of Lucretius or Lamarck" (presidential address, 1914, to British Association).

With regard to Darwinism, meaning man's descent from the monkey, some of our greatest scientists have gone on record with the opinion that there is not a particle of scientific evidence to justify this theory. To some this may seem a bold statement. Let me confirm it by specific declarations.

Rudolph Virchow, a distinguished scientist, founder of cellular pathology and an eminent

authority on anthropology, says: "Natural science, so long as it remains science, works only with really existing objects. A hypothesis may be discussed, but its significance can be established only by producing actual proofs in its favor, either by experiment or direct observation. This Darwinism has not succeeded in doing. In vain have its adherents sought for connecting links which should connect man with the monkey. Not a single one has been found" (address to the Twentieth Century Congress of the German Anthropological Association).

Another scientist of distinction speaks as follows: "The Darwinian theory of descent has not a single fact to confirm it in the realm of nature. It is not the result of scientific research, but purely the product of the imagination" (Professor Fleischmann, *Die darwin'sche Theorie*). Reinke, a noted biologist, sums up his researches in the matter in the following terse fashion: "The only statement consistent with her dignity that science can make is to say that she knows nothing about the origin of man" (Reinke, *Modern Biology,* p. 480).

These are but a few of the eminent men of science who might be quoted to the same effect. From science's own admission, therefore, it is

evident that Darwinism, meaning the descent of man from the monkey, is a discarded theory.

But there is a third sense in which Darwinism is used, namely, to mean evolution. As said previously, Darwinism is not evolution, but only a passing phase of it. However, taking it in its popular sense, that of evolution, what is its present status? As evolution is the subject of this chapter, and will be dealt with as we proceed, I shall say in passing that present day evolution itself is now a very fluctuating theory.

In corroboration of this I cite the latest authority on the subject, Professor Paul Kammerer, of the University of Vienna: "The theory of evolution at the present time is pointing in a new direction. Celebrated biologists like Kurt Herbst, of Heidelberg, and William Bateson, of the University of Cambridge, openly deride the concept of evolution in their lectures" (*Literary Review,* Feb. 23, 1924). Kammerer is the author of *Allgemeine Biologie,* a work which attests research and scholarship.

The variation of the present day theory of evolution may be shown in a way to impress even the ordinary reader by the statement which follows: "Far more eloquent than any amount of polemics is the fact that vertebrates, for instance, have already been *proved* to be descended

from *six different sources.* Emil du Bois-Reymond said once that phylogeny of this sort is of about as much scientific value as are the pedigrees of the heroes of Homer, and I think we may fully endorse his opinion on this point" (Dreisch, *Science and Philosophy of the Organism,* Vol. I, p. 256).

It will thus be seen that Darwinism, taken in any or all of its meanings, is at most but a theory. But Darwinism is not evolution. Hence, now that Darwinism has been rejected by scientific experts, evolution as a working theory continues. The pity of it is that Darwinism is proclaimed in text books and from lecture platforms and in magazines as a scientific fact. Scientists who get their knowledge from nature know that it is an exploded theory. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. It is also loud. But to return to evolution.

What is evolution? We are beginning, as is evident, with definition. Most misunderstandings arise from lack of definition of terms. Two parties at variance often find that they agree when they know just what each means. First of all, evolution is a *theory.* This is the first and most important thing to bear in mind. Evolution is not a *fact.* It is only a scientific hypothesis or theory.

To prove that evolution is but a theory, it is only necessary to say that, since the birth of modern evolution, it has passed through three stages, Lamarckism, Darwinism, and evolution as it is today. Darwinism, as has been said, is only one phase of evolution. Evolution existed before Darwinism, and now that Darwinism is rejected by the foremost scientists, evolution in a new form continues as a *theory*. A fact never changes. Evolution, up to the present, is constantly changing. The greatest advocates of evolution are frequently to be found in opposition on matters essential to evolution.

And what is the theory of evolution? In a general way, it may be stated thus: "The theory of evolution as a scientific hypothesis does not consider the present species of plants and animals directly created by God, but as the final result of an evolution from other species existing in former geological periods. It implies the descent of the present from extinct species" (Wasmann).

Evolution thus stated is not out of harmony with revelation. The great Jesuit theologian, Knabenbauer, declared in 1877 that "There is no objection, so far as faith is concerned, to assuming the descent of all plant and animal species from a few types." Evolution as such

is, therefore, no bugbear to Christians. Whence, then, comes the opposition of some evolutionists to religion? It comes from the fact that they leave the field of science for that of speculation. Speculation is by its very meaning a venture. One may easily be mistaken when speculating.

Granting for the sake of argument, but not conceding that evolution is scientifically proven, there remains the explanation of *how* it came about. It is concerning the *how* that all the confusion arises, with its attendant antagonisms. The *how* of evolution is one thing, the *fact* of evolution another. Christians hold that, if evolution be a fact, it owes its origin and existence to the Creator, who in the beginning made all things, evolution included. Those who oppose evolution to Christianity hold that evolution is its own source and origin, being a power or force in eternal matter, thus excluding a Creator. They assert that matter, being eternal, had no maker, that it is its own cause of existence, and that God has no place in the universe. This leads us to an inquiry into another phase of evolution.

Evolution as a scientific theory is not opposed to Christianity. It is only the abuse of evolution, by scientists who go outside their own do-

main to formulate their views, that causes antagonism between evolution and Christianity. Science deals with data. There are no data with regard to the origin of matter. So pronounced an evolutionist as Sir Oliver Lodge says: "Science knows nothing about the ultimate origin of things" (*Literary Review,* Feb. 23, 1924).

Once we enter the field of *how* matter began to be, we are in the realm of speculation, or metaphysics. It is when the scientist enters the metaphysical field that he is apt to go astray. A man may be a great scientist, but a poor metaphysician. The field of the scientist embraces everything that can be observed, measured or weighed. The ultimate *how* of things cannot be observed, but it may be inferred by reasoning.

Perhaps an illustration will serve to show the respective provinces of scientist and metaphysician. Suppose a house burns down, and nobody saw how the fire started. The fact is *what* occurred, namely, the fire. The theory is *how* it occurred, namely, the origin of the fire. On the one fact, the *fire,* there may be ten different theories or explanations of *how* it started. Any one of the ten may be correct, but in reality, only one is correct. Perhaps not one of the ten theories is correct.

Science has to do with the *what* of things and their proximate causes; metaphysics with the final *how*. Science deals with things themselves and their immediate origin, metaphysics with problems about the ultimate origin of things. If we keep this well in mind, it will help us to understand how it is that eminent scientists so often stultify themselves when they leave their own field of proximate *how* or *what* for that of ultimate *how*. They cease to be scientists when they enter the field of metaphysics, which is just as much a science as is that of medicine, law or engineering.

Metaphysics is a big word, but its meaning is simply the applying of reason to problems which are beyond the reach of the senses. The force of gravitation is an example. Gravitation cannot be seen, touched, tasted or heard. Newton saw an apple fall from the tree to the ground. That was a fact of observation. What caused it to fall? That was a problem of science, the proximate cause. A thousand scientists, if asked what caused the apple to fall, might have given a thousand different explanations. The very same fact would bring out various answers. Newton's mind gave us the cause, gravitation. But what causes gravitation? That is a problem of metaphysics. So with evolution. Granting

for the sake of argument, but not conceding, that it is a fact, *how* did it originate? What caused the processes of evolution?

Before considering the ultimate *how* of evolution, let me repeat that a man may be a great scientist, but a poor metaphysician. By *scientist* I mean always what the popular term implies, an expert in the so-called physical domain of science. A man might be the best physician in the world, but a very poor lawyer. The medical knowledge and experience of a great physician would not qualify him to give a legal decision. The most renowned surgeon would be ridiculed by lawyers if he attempted to give an interpretation of law, relying for its acceptance on his fame as a surgeon. Yet that is what is being done constantly in a different field by scientists.

There are two great schools of evolutionists when it comes to the ultimate *how* of evolution. Bear in mind that, in considering the final *how,* we are in the field of speculation. This means that the final *how* is as yet a *theory only.* The best proof that evolution is only a theory is that what it proclaims as dogma at one period is rejected the next.

When I say that the facts of evolution are not contrary to Christianity, I mean that everything which has been scientifically proven about evo-

lution is not out of harmony with revelation. It is only when the scientist enters another field, the field of guess or supposition or inference, that he may become opposed to revelation. This cannot be made too plain.

With regard to the final *how* of evolution, there are two chief explanations. One states that God made the world, the other, that the world is its own cause. In other words, granting for the sake of argument, but not conceding, that evolution is a fact, one school holds that evolution is an orderly process established by the Creator in the beginning. The other holds that there is no Creator, that evolution is its own origin.

They who hold that the Creator is the Author of evolution are on either a theistic or a Christian basis. They who declare evolution to be its own author are materialists. Here is the clash: Christianity and materialism. But consider well—it is not concerned with fact, but with theory. It has to do with the final *how,* not with the *what,* or the immediate how. *How* evolution, if it be a fact, came about, is as yet a mystery to science, but not altogether to revelation. Revelation gives an answer to the *how*—the only answer obtainable so far—that God is Author of all things, even of evolution if it be a

fact. Materialism thus opposes to revelation an inference based on no sufficient scientific data.

Now I propose to demonstrate logically that evolution, if it be a fact, cannot be its own cause. But before I do so, I want to present documentary evidence that the scientific theory of evolution is not opposed to revelation. By *scientific* theory is meant a theory which proceeds in a way conformable to science. Science must present data first—evidence, not surmise. A theory based on *assured data* is rightly a scientific *theory*.

All the data thus far obtained by every means cannot constitute the basis of an argument against revelation. For, supposing that the fossils so far discovered justify the theory of descent of present forms from extinct forms of the past, there is no opposition in this to revelation. "As to what, if anything, is outside or behind this mechanism of nature; as to whence or how it came about, or whither it is going; as to what it and what our consciousness of it really are, and why it is, and why we are here—modern science has no answer" (Sir Ray Lankester, *Science from an Easy Chair*).

If we want to know what revelation states about the making of the world, we go to the Bible. And if we want to know what the Bible

means, we go to the official interpreter of it. If there has been no official interpretation of any part in question, we go to the best unofficial sources of interpretation.

The Church of Christ which compiled the Bible, and which guarantees its contents and its inspiration, is its official interpreter. With regard to the mode of the creation of the world, as given in the Book of Genesis, the Church has made no dogmatic pronouncement. On matters not dogmatically defined there is wide latitude in the Church of Christ. Her great doctors and theologians are free to give full scope to their intellect on everything which does not pertain to dogma. This is no more a restriction than to limit a scientist to the laws of physics in his investigations. The truth does not restrict, but guides. Mathematics do not hinder but rather help a civil engineer.

Some of the greatest minds in the Church of Christ were advocates of a scientific theory of evolution. It is to them we go to demonstrate that Christianity and a scientific theory of evolution are not opposed. These great metaphysicians are doctors and theologians of the Church, and when they speak we know, at the very least, they do not misrepresent her.

One of the greatest thinkers of all time was

St. Augustine. The origin of the world had a wonderful fascination for his intellect. For many years he engaged in the study of the origin of things. His treatise on the six days of creation is the product of genius. The question with him was with regard to the plants and animals of the world. Were they created in the beginning just as they exist now, or were they evolved from something else? You see he looked at the subject like an evolutionist of today.

To be brief, his conclusion was that the world as we see it, with its plants and animals, was evolved from matter which contained in germ all the visible universe, just as an oak is evolved from the acorn. His words follow:

"In that little seed there is a more wonderful and powerful force which is capable of transforming the adjacent moisture mixed with earth into the nature of the tree, with its spreading branches, its green foliage, and its figure, its wealth and forms of fruit and the organization proper to each of its parts. For what is there that grows upon the tree or hangs from it, that has not been derived from the mysterious storehouse of the seed? But just as in the seed there were in an *invisible manner* all those things which were to arise in the course of time, so also we must conclude that the world, at the time

when God created all things simultaneously, contained simultaneously all those things which were made in it and with it when the day was made: not only the heavens with the sun, moon and stars, whose natures persist throughout their movements of rotation, together with the earth and seas, which are subject to irregular movements, but also those things which the water and earth produced in *power* and *causally* before they could develop in the course of time as we now know them" (Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram,* Book V, Chap. XXIII).

That is a theory of evolution. Not evolution in the modern sense, perhaps, but evolution nevertheless, but—and here is the rub—Augustine postulates ultimately a Creator of the seed. So does the Christian evolutionist of today. But the *material* evolutionist says No, that matter is its own cause or origin, ultimately.

Now, in point of fact, physical science as such cannot pronounce on the matter, since it is outside the domain of the senses. "Science is systematized and metrical knowledge, and in regions where measurement cannot be applied, it has small scope. . . . Science depends on measurement and things not measurable are therefore excluded, or tend to be excluded, from its attention" (Sir Oliver Lodge, address to the British

Association). It is a matter of deduction, and that belongs to the science of metaphysics. Those who postulate a Creator of the seed have revelation plus metaphysics to confirm them. Scientists have speculation only as their ally. But I propose to demonstrate that logic will not support the speculations of materialistic evolutionists.

Before coming to the demonstration, let us place before our minds the status of evolution as it presents itself today. In the first place, Darwinism, let it be repeated, is not evolution. Some of the greatest scientists in the world have abandoned Darwinism, yet it is taught at present in many of our colleges, and taken for granted by many of our magazine writers. It is not only taught as a theory, but as a proven fact.

Let me repeat that there is not a single fact in all nature which substantiates Darwin's theory. And yet a few years ago it was a so-called scientific dogma. This should teach us to be careful of accepting the infallible pronouncements of scientists.

Many of science's infallible teachings have gone the way of Darwinism. Only a few years ago, chemists considered it a *fact* that the atom was the smallest possible constituent of matter. No one ever saw an *atom*. It was part of a

theory. The theory of the atom was, in the judgment of chemists, final; more, it was certain, it had passed beyond theory. Now physicists inform us that the atom is a little universe of electrons. What they will tell us next we do not know. Another scientific dogma was spontaneous generation. Pasteur exploded that *fact.*

Facts are all right, but once you leave facts for their final *how,* without having any evidence, you cannot afford to dogmatize. And that is just what evolutionists of the materialistic school are doing. They are using their changeable theory against the revealed fact of Christianity. Like a gun with blank cartridges they may make a noise and create alarm, but they cannot affect Christianity in the least. Even the latest theory of evolution is now being questioned by some of its former most staunch advocates (*Literary Review,* Feb. 23, 1924).

Evolution is a changeable theory which some scientists would oppose to the truth of revelation. That there is no real opposition between revelation and a scientific theory of evolution, Augustine, a great churchman, is proof. It is only when evolution ceases to be scientific and becomes speculative that antagonism to Christianity manifests itself.

The purpose of scientific evolution is "to seek to determine the historical succession of the various species of plants and of animals on our earth, and with the aid of palæontology and other sciences, such as comparative morphology, embryology and bionomy, to show how in the course of the different geological epochs they gradually evolve from their beginnings by purely natural causes of specific development" (Wasmann, *Catholic Encyclopedia,* "Evolution").

Evolution's field, therefore, is to assemble data, and to examine and classify them. Once it goes beyond this, it is drawing conclusions which may or may not be justified. Circumstantial evidence in a court of law may be so strong as to bring conviction. And so with evolution. Data may compel but one legitimate conclusion. But when it comes to the *how* of the beginnings of things, there are no data to go by.

There may or may not be data to justify a scientist in stating that one species of plant or animal is derived from another. The scientific world is at variance on this point. It is easy to mistake variations for species. However, with regard to what can be inspected, science may draw legitimate conclusions.

But there is nothing to inspect with regard to the beginnings of things. Hence reasoning on the origin of the world is outside the scientific theory of evolution, and belongs to philosophy or speculative science because there are as yet no data to go by. That does not mean that we should not try to solve these problems, but that they belong to the province of metaphysics. Having said this much as a basis for our demonstration, I shall now return to my proposition that logic does not uphold materialistic evolution.

There are two great classes of evolutionists, the Monists and the Dualists. The Monists derive their name from the Greek word *monos,* which means *single.* They attribute the world to a single cause—eternal matter. Dualists, on the other hand, attribute the world to a twofold cause, namely, the Creator as First Cause, and matter, His production and agent, as secondary cause, evolving by the powers and processes with which He endowed it.

Monists are materialists; Dualists are Christians, or, at least, theists. Christianity is opposed to any theory of evolution which shuts out the Creator from the world. In all that I am now stating, I abstract from man. With regard to man, I shall have something very special to say.

Now what ground have materialists to stand on? I think it can be demonstrated that their basis is shifting sand. It is to be demonstrated, therefore, that matter cannot be its own cause or origin, as claimed by Monists or materialists. The following demonstration has nothing to do with religion as such. It is a proof drawn from the science of metaphysics, and may be put in the following form:

The material universe is subject to law. What is subject to law cannot be its own cause, since it is dependent on another. It is evident that what is under law is subject to, or dependent on another, since it is limited in its action by the other. The universe is absolutely limited in its action because it follows a course from which, in the order of nature, it never deviates. Physics, chemistry and astronomy are governed absolutely by naturally unalterable laws.

Whatever is its own cause is self-existent, not dependent on another for existence or operation. Matter being bound by law, which implies a law-giver, depends on another and is not, consequently, self-existent, not its own cause.

To put it briefly: Whatever is its own cause is self-existent. Matter being under law is not self-existent, hence matter is not its own cause,

and consequently does not explain the origin of the universe.

It follows, therefore, from pure reason that materialistic or Monistic evolution is false.

The falseness of this materialistic theory may be proved in another way, perhaps more convincing and easier of understanding for most readers. The material universe is subject to law. Law supposes a law-giver. Therefore the material universe supposes a law-giver.

The universe is a vast machine wonderfully fashioned, all its parts being harmoniously arranged one with another, and marvelously adapted to orderly operation. A machine supposes a superior power outside itself and existing by nature before itself. The world machine likewise postulates a superior power outside itself and by nature prior to itself.

The universe machine manifests coordination, plan and purpose, all of which call for intelligence, foresight and calculation. Matter has none of these qualities. It is only an intelligent being who possesses such attributes. This intelligent being, this power which matter necessarily postulates and which must be by nature prior to it, we call the Eternal, the Infinite, the First Cause, the Creator, God.

There is no evasion of this argument. The

material universe could not limit and bind itself. Nature acts by inflexible laws, it is Somebody's agent or servant. That Somebody is the Creator.

Materialists might try to offset this argument by saying that the world is a self-existent, self-evolving machine. The answer to this is that what is self-existent is infinite and eternal, as has been demonstrated, and matter because it is restricted and determined by inflexible laws cannot be self-existent, infinite and eternal.

If one is logical and consistent, one cannot escape this argument of law-bound matter. Nothing material can bind itself, nor direct itself. Once you admit orderly and fixed processes in nature, you are compelled to admit intelligent direction.

"Man is the one being who can appreciate the infinite variety and beauty of the life world, the one being who can utilize in any adequate manner the myriad productions of its mechanics and its chemistry. Man is the only being capable in some degree of comprehending and apprehending the fore-ordained method of a superior mind. That is surely the glory and distinction of man,—that he is continually and steadily advancing in the knowledge of the vastness and mystery of the universe in which he

lives. We are forced to the assumption of an infinite God by the fact that our earth has developed life and mind and ourselves" (Alfred Russell Wallace, co-discoverer with Darwin of natural selection, *The World of Life,* pp. 403-423).

Intelligence is not matter because intelligence can reflect on itself; matter can not. Intelligence can foresee and calculate and decide; matter can not. We must renounce logic, or admit that an orderly world demands an intelligent maker. This intelligent maker is the Creator, God.

"It is perhaps not too much to say that the more fully this conception of universal evolution is grasped, the more firmly a scientific doctrine of Providence will be established, and the stronger will be the presumption of a future progress" (Lecky, *History of Rationalism,* Vol. I, p. 316).

Once a reasonable man understands that the world is a vast and orderly mechanism, he must recognize that it had some power or cause to direct it in an orderly manner. Some materialists, forced by this reasoning to admit intelligent direction in the universe, declare that the universe is God. But this argument is refuted by evolutionists themselves.

"Nature being subject to law, cannot there-

fore be God. She is the wondrous product of His almighty will. Thus the will of God is everywhere expressed by the laws of nature, since these laws originate from Him" (Lamarck, father of organic evolutionism, *Système analytique,* p. 43).

Even Huxley, who is an outstanding evolutionist, sees no difficulty in admitting a Creator.

"It seems to me that creation, in the ordinary sense of the word, is perfectly conceivable. I find no difficulty in imagining that at some former period this universe was not in existence, and that it made its appearance in consequence of the volition of some preexisting Being" (Huxley, *Life of Darwin,* II, p. 187).

Besides, God, being infinite, has every perfection conceivable. He is perfection itself. Matter changes, and whatever changes is passing from one stage to another, lacks something, tends to something it has not, all of which constitutes matter imperfect, consequently not identical with God, the All-Perfect.

Without appealing to religion or revelation, therefore, we have demonstrated that Monism or materialism is false.

This phase of the matter may be concluded by a few statements by some of the world's foremost men of science.

"The existence of a being endowed with intelligence and wisdom is a necessary inference from a study of celestial mechanics" (Newton, *Principia Schol. Gen.*).

"Our noblest attributes as men are ours because they are essential constituents of the image of Him who in the beginning created not only the heaven and the earth, but the materials of which heaven and earth consist" (Clark-Maxwell, address to the British Association).

"Shall we possess these things and God not possess them? Let no worthy human attribute be denied to the Deity. Whatever worthy attribute belongs to man, be it personality or any other, its existence in the universe is thereby admitted, we can deny it no more" (Sir Oliver Lodge, in *Hibbert Journal,* Jan., 1903).

"Nature declares that there is one everlasting Creator and Ruler" (Lord Kelvin, presidential address to British Association).

These are pronouncements of eminent men of science. These scientists do not see the need of banishing God from creation.

Having shown that monistic evolution, or materialism, with regard to the origin of the universe, is untenable, what may be said of evolution as a scientific theory with regard to

the plants and animals of this earth of ours? For these are things with which science can deal. Revelation can grant everything that scientific evolution has demonstrated. I do not say revelation grants the claims of evolution, but that it *can* grant all that evolution has established.

With regard to evolution, evolutionists themselves are not in accord. Haeckel differed with Darwin, and fraudulently misrepresented him in order to reinforce his own theory. Haeckel in turn has been discredited by Branco. And so it goes.

Let me say in brief that all investigations into the matter have failed to show a single well established case of the derivation of one real species from another. It is true that man, by his superior intelligence and by selection, mating and other painstaking processes, has produced modifications in plants and some of the insignificant animals. But all this is not evolution. It is human, intelligent interference. Evolution means the process of *natural* change from one species into another. All the data of scientific research have not given us positive evidence of such change.

Moreover, when evolutionists speak of species, hardly any two agree on what constitutes species.

If you make your own system of species, you may be able to prove anything. Real species means something differentiating one thing entirely from another. It does not mean structure alone, nor organs alone, nor tendencies alone, but all these combined in such a way that they mark one kind as *entirely* different from another kind.

Species as a term is used by many evolutionists in the loosest fashion. Understanding the term *species* in its true sense, I have not seen anywhere, in fossils or remains of any description, a single fact to substantiate evolution in its true sense.

This does not mean that evolutionists are beating the air. Far from it. Every scientific effort, honestly made, helps to the sum of knowledge and to the betterment of the human race. Evolution, while not substantiating its claims, has nevertheless resulted and is resulting in splendid achievements in the field of zoology, palæontology and other departments of science. But this is not saying that it has established its claims to acceptance.

Thirty years ago Darwinism was scientific gospel. If one did not accept it, one was considered ignorant or bigoted or unprogressive. Religion never dogmatized as did Darwinism.

Now, after a few years, Darwinism is banished from the scientific creed.

In proof of this assertion, I quote William Bateson, acknowledged by modern scientists to be the greatest living authority on genetics:

"We go to Darwin for his incomparable collection of facts. We would fain emulate his scholarship, his width and his power of exposition, but to us he speaks no more with philosophic authority. We read his scheme of evolution as we would those of Lucretius or Lamarck, delighting in their simplicity and their courage" (presidential address to British Association, Part I, Melbourne, p. 8).

Thus spoke Bateson, the president of the British Association, possibly the most learned body of scientists in the world. Yet after a pronouncement of this weight, there are college professors and magazine writers who take Darwinism for granted. Darwinism, an exploded theory, is taught in many of our halls of learning.

Further on in this same presidential address, Bateson said:

"My predecessor, Sir Oliver Lodge, said last year [1914] that in physics the age is one of rapid progress and profound scepticism. In at least as high a degree, this is true of biology, and as a chief characteristic of modern evolutionary

thought, we must confess also to a deep but irksome humility in presence of great vital problems. Every theory of evolution must be such as to *accord with facts* of physics and chemistry, a primary necessity to which our predecessors *paid small heed.* Of the physics and chemistry of life, we know next to nothing. Living things are found by a simple experiment to have *powers undreamed of,* and who knows what may be behind."

Thus speaks a scientific giant. He states his humility with regard to the claims of evolution. Not so the rank and file of evolutionists who get their information second hand. They are sure; no room for doubt or hesitation with them, no place for humility with those who know evolution to be a fact. These same blind upholders of discarded theories look with contempt on the Christian who believes in revelation, while they themselves make an act of faith in fickle men and faded theories.

There exists in some quarters a real theophobia; in plain English, a God-dread. Scientists of a certain type have a dread of admitting a Creator in creation. They swallow whole the preposterous claims of so-called scientists, while rejecting as infantile the claims of Christianity, which have won admission into the minds of a

Copernicus, a Newton, a Pasteur and countless other men of genius.

As an example of a keen observer's conclusion on the origin of things, let me ask you to weigh the following:

"Since there must have been something from eternity, because there is something now, the eternal being must be an intelligent being, because there is intelligence now; for no man will venture to assert that non-entity can produce entity, or non-intelligence, intelligence. And such a being must exist necessarily, whether things have been always as they are, or whether they have been made in time: because it is no more easy to conceive an infinite than a finite progression of effects without a cause" (Bolingbroke, *Epistle I*).

It is sad to think of the number of trusting men and women, youths and maidens, who have been led to unbelief in religion by the hollow credentials of discredited teachers of science. As a result of Darwinism, so-called, a wave of unbelief swept over the intellectual world. It got to be the fashion to disregard Providence and to deny the argument from *design* which the world furnishes. But real thinkers were not misled. Let me quote here the profound observations of Lecky:

"That matter is governed by mind, that the contrivances and elaborations of the universe are the products of intelligence, are propositions which are quite unshaken, whether we regard these contrivances as the result of a single momentary exercise of will, or of a slow, consistent and regulated evolution. Indeed it is perhaps not too much to say that the more fully the conception of universal evolution is grasped, the more firmly a scientific doctrine of Providence will be established" (*History of Rationalism,* Vol. I, p. 316).

Darwin himself, after completing his great work, made a similar declaration. This was before his head had been turned by adulation and before he left the field of science for that of metaphysics. His words should close forever the mouths of those who base their denial of God on Darwinism. At the end of his monumental work, *Origin of Species,* he made the following act of faith:

"There is a grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the *Creator* into a few forms, or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms, most

beautiful and most wonderful, have been and are being evolved."

After these words, no scientist need blush to admit the Creator into His own creation.

The great Wasmann, after his more than ten thousand experiments in evolution, concluded as follows:

"I am convinced that the rock of Christianity will stand firm, even if the theory of evolution as a scientific hypothesis triumphs over the old theory of permanence. Christianity and science are not natural enemies, but natural friends. Human knowledge and the Christian faith are not opposed to one another. Both are streams flowing from one original source, from one and the same infinite, eternal and divine wisdom. This wisdom cannot contradict itself, although it may address us now in one, now in another language. Hence I am firmly convinced also that there can be no real contradiction between Christianity and science" (*Problem of Evolution,* p. 84).

These are the words of a scientist who has written almost a library of books on science, and who has obtained his facts, not from hearsay or from manuals or magazines, but from actual observation and experimentation. It is deplorable to see the firm faith of multitudes in Darwinism

and in materialism, based only upon casual reading or third or tenth hand information.

If materialism did not make man an irresponsible agent, I wonder how many would accept it on its absurd proofs. But Darwinism and materialism justify a man in drifting with his impulses and passions. What an attraction to human nature! And what a result! Tell man he cannot help his vicious tendencies and you make him a vicious animal. Fundamentally, materialism does that.

Most people believe that Darwin taught that man came from the monkey. He never specifically taught monkey ancestry. Some of his unprincipled followers saddled that on him. Haeckel, among others, to substantiate his own theory, claimed monkey ancestry to be an outcome of Darwin's system. Darwinism proper does not teach specifically that man descended from an ape. Its meaning is that in the struggle for existence the creatures best qualified to accommodate themselves to environment outlast the others and transmit their qualities to their descendants, gradually evolving a new variety or species. He concluded that man was descended from some quadruped, but not specifically from the monkey.

Haeckel, being an atheist, or rather a hater

of God, whom he called "a gaseous vertebrate," spent a great part of his life endeavoring to make the data of Darwin serve his own purpose. It was Haeckel who made Darwinism signify descent of man from monkey. And in order to do it, he was guilty of fraud and forgeries, as every well-informed scientist knows.

Darwin himself was shocked at some of Haeckel's deductions, which drew from him this remark: "Your boldness makes me tremble." In order to understand Darwin's mind we have only to consider his words to Bentham: "When we descend to details, we can prove that not one species has changed" (*Life and Letters of Charles Darwin,* Vol. I, p. 210). Consistency was not one of Darwin's virtues.

Again he writes: "I for one can conscientiously declare that I never feel surprised at anyone sticking to the belief in immutability" (*ibid.,* p. 211). He further states: "In my most extreme fluctuations, I have never been an atheist, in the sense of denying the existence of God" (*ibid.,* p. 274).

Darwin, who perhaps knew more than any other scientist about actual conditions of animal and plant life, thus goes on record with the opinion that evolution postulates an intelligent cause, a superior power, a *Creator.* How dread-

fully his theory and his name have been misrepresented and misused by haters of God in order to uphold their theophobian theories! Theory as a working hypothesis is necessary to investigation, but theory should not parade as fact.

The words of a philosopher may fittingly conclude this phase of our subject:

"How many theories have I lived to see established and confuted! We are poor silly animals, we live for an instant upon a particle of a boundless universe, and are much like a butterfly that should argue about the nature of the seasons, and of what creates their vicissitudes, and does not exist itself to see one revolution of them" (Horace Walpole, *Letters* [to the Earl of Stafford]).

In spite of the fickleness of theory, scientists of a certain type, relying solely on theory, deny a spiritual soul to man, and intelligence to the Maker of man. They employ their God-given intellect to assail God. They misuse their intelligence to deny intelligence to the Giver of it. They prefer to evolve mind from matter rather than admit an intelligent Author of all things. We prefer to believe that intelligence had an intelligent Source.

Since Darwinism is, though erroneously, commonly applied to that phase of evolution which asserts the descent of man from monkey, and since this is the phase which has greater significance for us, I shall conclude the subject by a brief consideration of the monkey theory of man's generation.

The origin and destiny of man are the two most important considerations that can engage the human intellect. It makes a vast difference to man whether or not he has a career like the beast. If he be only a high-grade animal, his life will be only that of a super-animal.

Sad to say, the world during the past decade has shown what the super-animal is capable of. Might is the law of animal life. The survival of the strong has been the motto of certain modern men and nations. Animals are following natural instinct when they kill to live. Often they must kill, or be killed. Strength and cunning are their great virtues. Strength has been held up to mankind of late as the dominant virtue.

And if man is only a super-brute, why should not strength be his main glory? Right supposes conscience, and a super-power to enforce the dictates of conscience. But super-power and conscience vanish with the monkey-man theory.

Might becomes right. Man reverts to the law of the jungle, which prescribes chiefly attack or defense. The civilization built on personal rights and property rights crumbles as we see it crumbled today in certain places where God has been relegated to mythland.

Before I go into details, I wish to state emphatically that there are absolutely no scientific data to substantiate the theory of the descent of man from beast. I have investigated all the so-called missing links and the chain of so-called evidence for monkey ancestry, and find that, if it were evidence presented in court, it would be rejected by any jury of sane men who were without prejudice.

It is simply amazing what stuff some people will swallow whole because it is labeled *science:* Even college professors are hypnotized by the magic word *science.* Like Trilby they give forth every idea which the Svengali pseudo-scientist suggests. It is indeed a mystery. Perhaps the explanation is that the monkey theory gives its adherents full fling in the path of life. For why should an animal, even a super-animal, care for right or wrong, except for expediency?

However, if it should ever be scientifically proved that man, with regard to his body, has descended from the beast, this would not neces-

sarily militate against the Christian faith. Man, as regards his body, is formed of dust, and returns to dust. But in man the Creator has placed a divine jewel, the spiritual image of Himself, which we call the *soul*. That soul it is which constitutes the clay to be man. That soul it is which is not and cannot be evolved from matter, because matter has parts and the soul has none.

The soul is a spiritual substance, capable of independent acts and existence, hence not necessarily dependent on matter, though matter is its instrument in mortal life. It is the soul of man which rises above the sphere of matter into the realm of the abstract, dealing with ideas and contingencies which do not exist in the material world. Some such ideas are *truth, honor, right, responsibility, probability, infinitude, futurity.*

None of these are material things, yet the soul deals with these abstractions. No one ever saw or touched futurity or any abstract idea, yet the soul is at home in the realm of the abstract. It is in this realm that it speculates on the future, composes musical themes, creates poetry, inquires into the hidden causes of things, etc., all of which are essentially different from the activities displayed by animal intelligence, which never transcends material conceptions.

The soul of man, not only by the teaching of

Christianity but by the logic of metaphysics, cannot be evolved from matter. Any theory of evolution which includes the soul of man is antagonistic to revelation and to science. Science and revelation have the same Author, God, who cannot say one thing by revelation and its contradictory by science. Revelation and nature are the language of the Creator, hence true science will never be opposed to revelation.

Science, having to do with what can be seen, weighed or measured has, in the bodily part of man, a proper field of investigation. But so far science has furnished no data which substantiate man's body-evolution from beast.

"In the first decade of the twentieth century, it has become apparent that the days of Darwinism are numbered. Among its latest opponents are such savants as Eimer, Gustav Wolff, DeVries, Hooker, Von Wellstein, Fleischmann, Reinke, and many others" (Hartmann, *Annalen der Naturphilosophie,* Vol. II, 1903).

I may say that scientific investigation will never be able to conclude anything with regard to the soul of man, because the soul, being outside the field of weight, measurement or sight, cannot be the object of material experiment, and science knows no other. It is only by metaphysics that the soul can be studied. That word,

metaphysics, is, in a way, a good example of the soul nature. Imagine or try to conceive of a substance other than spiritual dealing with such a term.

With regard to the body of man, I said that there were no scientific data to corroborate evolution. Neither zoology nor palæontology nor chemistry can point to anything except conjecture in support of the man-beast theory. Professor Branco, in his lecture on fossil man at the Fifth Zoological Congress at Berlin, asserted that "we know absolutely no ancestors of the human race."

Professor Schwalbe makes the following statement:

"In no department of natural science has the attempt to draw general conclusions from an aggregate of facts been so much influenced by the subjective opinions of the individual scientist as in the primitive history of mankind. On this subject it has frequently happened that views, based on a few facts, have been regarded as definitely obtained scientific results by those who have not studied the matter closely, because these views have been enunciated with a peculiar assurance" (*Primitive History of Man*).

Wallace, co-discoverer with Darwin of natural selection, has this to say:

"A number of man's most characteristic and noblest faculties, those which raise him farthest above the brutes and open up possibilities of almost indefinite advancement, *could not possibly have been developed* by means of the same laws which have determined the progressive development of the organic world in general and also of man's physical organism" (*Darwinism,* p. 474).

Branco and Schwalbe and Wallace are evolutionists. Their statements therefore cannot be called in question on the ground that they are opponents to the theory. Their words are a corroboration from a scientific standpoint of the statement that we have no certain data for saying that man is descended from monkey.

Haeckel, the great upholder of the man-monkey theory, was so carried away by subjective bias that he not only drew false conclusions, but manufactured false evidence to support his claims. Haeckel it was who originated the word *Darwinism* as a synonym for monkey ancestry of man.

Some of our museums and libraries have exhibits of the progressive development of man from the monkey stage. These exhibits are presented as actual reproductions justified by fossils. They are not justified. They illustrate that

the wish is father to the thought. Let me here repeat what Fleischmann says:

"The Darwinian theory of descent has not a single fact to confirm it in the realm of nature" (*Die Darwin'sche Theorie*).

To which I may add the verdict of Reinke:

"The only statement consistent with her dignity that science can make is to say that she knows nothing about the origin of man" (*Modern Biology,* p. 480).

Employing a few fragmentary fossils, the nature of which is debated by true scientists, pseudo-scientists have reconstructed man at various stages from the ape to his present status, and presented to millions of unsuspecting people so-called visible proofs of the descent of man from beast. It is a scientific crime, fostered and abetted by those who should be the very last to perpetrate it.

Let me in conclusion cite the words of a real scientist, one who, besides being conversant with physics, zoology, palæontology and chemistry, is also a trained metaphysician.

"I appreciate fully the zeal with which scientists are carrying on their investigations into the primitive history of the human race; and provided they do so in accordance with scientific procedure, I have no reason at all for

protesting. Whatever science reveals, I shall accept without reservation, but the case is entirely different with phantoms of the imagination set forth as facts. . . .

"If we assume that God is the Creator of all things, and that the world created by Him has evolved independently and automatically, we have actually a greater idea of God than if we regard Him as constantly interfering with the working of the laws of nature. Let us imagine two billiard players, each having a hundred balls to direct. The one needs a hundred strokes in order to accomplish his end; the other with one stroke sets all the balls in motion, as he will. The latter is undoubtedly the more skilful player.

"St. Thomas Aquinas stated long ago that the force of any cause was the greater the further its action extended. God does not interfere directly in the natural order when He can work through natural causes. This is by no means a new principle, but a very old one, and it shows us that the theory of evolution, as a scientific hypothesis and theory, as far as it can be really proved, is perfectly compatible with the Christian theory of the origin of things. According to this view, the evolution of the organic world is but a little line in the millions of pages con-

tained in the Book of Evolution of the whole universe, on the title-page of which still stands written in indelible letters: 'In the beginning, God created heaven and earth'" (Wasmann, *The Problem of Evolution,* pp. 19, 77).

After this pronouncement of a master scientist, it will require no little courage and a great deal of misinformation for anyone to state that science is opposed to religion or that the scientific theory of evolution is antagonistic to revelation. The Church of Christ, being divine, can never be opposed to what is really true. Generation after generation, this Church, built on the rock of truth by the divine Builder, has withstood the assaults of every conceivable wave of error and storm of passion.

And so it shall be to the end. The Church may be falsely championed, as may science, but no true champion of the Church will ever be in conflict with a true champion of science. Christianity welcomes the strongest light that can be thrown on her. The stronger the light, the more she shows divine. But it must be the white light of truth, not the colored light of fancy. True science will always be a firm friend of revealed religion.

JESUS CHRIST

Rationalists tell us that if they could be certain that Christ claimed He was God they would believe in His Godhead. They say this because they realize that Christ was the most perfect man intellectually and morally that the world has known. But they contend that Christ Himself did not believe He was God in the true sense—namely, that He was Jehovah. They admit He was a great teacher, a great man, the most perfect that ever lived, but affirm that He was not God, and, moreover, that He did not consider Himself God, but that He declared He was divine in order better to inculcate His precepts and to gain a following. Others affirm that in declaring He was God He employed Oriental exaggeration, and that His hearers so understood.

The psychological element thus enters into the matter. Did Christ in His own mind believe that He was God Almighty? For if He did, we must believe Him. He cannot be regarded as an impostor or as a lunatic. He was too good

to be a deceiver, and too wise to be a fool. Since He was neither knave nor fool, He must be what He claimed to be. There is no evasion of this conclusion.

Hence, from the viewpoint of rationalists, it is all important to know just what Christ Himself considered Himself to be. The question of who and what Christ was in His own estimation thus becomes paramount.

Before we give Christ's own estimate of Himself, His own calm, judicial statements as to His own personality, we shall first consider His portraiture as given in the Gospels. It has been said that if Christ were not a living reality, no human pen could picture Him as He is described in the Gospels. There is no figure in history at all like or comparable to Jesus Christ. He is unique. To create a character like Christ would require greater genius than that of Homer, Dante and Shakespeare combined.

Christ was not a man pictured by effort of human genius. He was an actuality. The Gospel Christ was a living person. How could the Evangelists, all of them very ordinary men, create a character superior to anything in the whole realm of literature? And the Christ of each one of the Gospels is equally the unique figure of all time. The reason is that the Gospels

are a photograph of Christ, not a painting conceived by human genius. Four cameras may produce the same likeness, but not four brushes.

The first thing about Christ, then, is this: The mere representation of Him is something beyond human capacity. The Evangelists nowhere attempt to adorn or accentuate the character of Christ. They are just four recorders of what they saw. Any greatness in their narrative is the very person of Christ itself. It is conceded by the critics of all the ages that Christ is the most perfect Being that history records.

Before we give Christ's own estimate of who and what He was, an estimate we must accept, in view of His unparalleled goodness and intelligence, we shall see what His immediate associates thought of Him, what they considered Him to be. And in this estimate we must reflect that they were as sceptical as any moderns, and that, moreover, they paid dearly for the judgment they passed on Him, to follow whom they left all things, even life.

What was the Apostles' and Evangelists' opinion of Jesus Christ? Did they believe Him to be merely a just man, a human Messiah, as rationalists and others would have us believe? Omitting St. John, who proclaims Christ true God on almost every page, the other Evangelists

call Christ the Son of God in at least twenty four instances. Moreover, to show that they mean God in the true sense, they adore Him, giving Him a worship accorded to Jehovah only.

After Jesus had stilled the tempest, having commanded the winds and the waves as a captain his soldiers, St. Matthew narrates: "They that were in the boat came and adored Him, saying: Indeed thou art the Son of God" (Matt. XIV. 33). At Cæsarea Philippi, where Peter made his profession of faith in his Master's divinity, he exclaimed: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Our Lord blessed Peter for his profession of faith, and accepted the adoration which accompanied it. This He could not have done unless Peter were justified in calling Him God and adoring Him as such. Christ, the most perfect person, would have been guilty of encouraging blasphemy and idolatry unless He were truly God.

A casual reading of the Gospels will present other instances of a like nature, in all of which Christ acquiesced.

One of the last scenes of His life presents a profession of faith by an utter stranger, a profession rewarded instantly and divinely. The thief on the cross, hearing the prayer of forgiveness which fell from Christ's lips in reply to

the insults of the mob, concluded that this was no mere man who was suffering alongside him. Criminal as he was himself, he knew men.

He heard the repeated taunt: "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross," and he heard in reply: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He made the mockery of the mob his confession of faith. Doubtless, too, the blood of Christ had pleaded for him. With a loud voice he bravely made his profession of belief in the divinity of the Crucified: "Lord, remember me when thou shalt come into thy kingdom."

He calls that accused malefactor *Lord,* Lord in the real sense, Lord of a kingdom, of a kingdom not of this world, of a kingdom beyond the cross, beyond the grave, a realm they both were rapidly approaching, the Lord of which was that bleeding, dying victim. The lips of the Crucified opened, the reward of faith was pronounced: "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise."

What a burlesque, unless Christ were God! A man of rare intelligence and lofty morality does not make a parody of his last moments. What a mockery was Calvary if it was not a divine tragedy. Evidently Christ believed Himself to be the Ruler of a kingdom beyond, or

He had not pronounced this dying benediction on the repentant thief.

But did He really believe Himself to be God? Did He hold himself to be Jehovah? Did He claim that He was in reality Almighty God, the Creator of the world? He did. There is no question at all that He claimed He was God. All admit that. But some maintain that His claims were not meant to be taken seriously, that He did not Himself believe He was Almighty God. Let us look into the matter judicially, weighing evidence and reaching a conclusion which logic demands.

Jesus Christ repeatedly affirmed that He was God. That He meant *God* in the true meaning of the word is evident from the fact that He claimed for Himself the prerogatives of Almighty God. He might have used the word *God* or *Son of God* frequently, as applied to Himself, and yet not have signified that He was in very deed God, Jehovah.

But when He demands for Himself the service and adoration and loyalty which are due to Almighty God alone, He is claiming to be very God. If He is not God, He is a blasphemer, a usurper of divine honors, an impostor, an encourager of idolatry. He is all that, or a madman. Christ, if He be not God, is either fool or

knave. There is no escape from this verdict, as we shall proceed to demonstrate.

Before we present His claims to divinity and to divine worship and service, it is well to recall that He is held to be the best balanced personality in the history of the world. Every way you regard Christ, He stands out superior to any character known to mankind.

"It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character, which, through all the changes of eighteen centuries, has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love; has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments and conditions; has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to its practice; and has exercised so deep an influence that it may be truly said that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and to soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists" (Lecky, *History of European Morals*).

This is the person who claimed to be God. We shall now examine whether or not He really meant His claims to be received literally. For if He did, we must accept them. Not that we accept a man's claims with regard to Himself, but that we do in the case of a person like Christ.

In what sense, therefore, did Christ Himself regard His claims to Godhead? He not only stated that He was God repeatedly and plainly, but He amplified His statement by assuming the attributes and prerogatives of God Almighty. He demanded of mankind for Himself the reverence and service which are due to Almighty God alone.

"What things soever the Father doth, these the Son also doth in like manner. For as the Father raiseth up the dead and giveth life, so the Son also giveth life to whom He will, that all may honor the Son as they honor the Father" (John, V. 19). "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John, XIV. 15).

It is not necessary to establish the fact that Christ said He was God. That is evident to everybody. His most solemn declaration that He was God was before the high priest, who said to Him: "I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us if thou be the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus said to him: "Thou hast said it" (Matt. XXVI. 63). St. Mark records it: "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the blessed God? And Jesus said to him: I am" (Mark, XIV. 61.).

That Christ meant that He was very God is evidenced by the fact that the high priest ad-

judged Him guilty of blasphemy and decreed that He was deserving of death. If Christ did not believe Himself God in the true sense, it was His duty to say so, and thus prevent His accusers from committing judicial murder. He was solemnly adjured by the living God to say who He was. His reply was direct, clear, absolute, that He was the Son of God.

On a certain Sabbath day Jesus healed a cripple who had been disabled thirty-eight years. The Jews, who did not want to recognize Him as the Messiah because He preached a heavenly instead of an earthly kingdom, were constantly seeking pretexts to discredit Him. On this occasion they were incensed against Him because He had healed on the Sabbath, which, according to their tradition, was against the law.

Jesus did not excuse Himself, or argue that in case of necessity the law might be dispensed with, but simply stated that He, as the Son of God, was Lord of the Sabbath, and that therefore He might set aside the law at His own good pleasure. On hearing this, the Jews sought to kill Him "because he did not only break the Sabbath, but also said God was his Father, making himself equal to God" (John, V. 18). They understood Him to assert that He was the Son of God in such sense that He Himself was a

divine person, and therefore true God, having the same divine nature as Jehovah.

They did not accept His claim, but they understood what it was. He rebuked them for their bad faith, saying: "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not, but if I do, though you do not believe me, believe the works. The works themselves which I do give testimony of me, that the Father hath sent me." Christ had appealed to His works as proof that He was God. Hence, if His claim was not true, God Himself was testifying to a lie by upholding Christ's claims by deeds which none but divine power could effect.

He constantly calls Almighty God, Father. In so doing it is not in the sense that we call God Father. Christ Himself taught all mankind to call God, Father, and to ask Him to forgive them their trespasses. When we address God as Father we do so as dependents.

Not so Christ. He declared He was equal in all things to His Father, that He did all things which the Father did. "What things soever the Father doth, these the Son also doth in like manner" (John, V. 19). And to show that when He says Father, He means Almighty God, He added: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead

and giveth life, so the Son also giveth life." God alone is the Author of life.

And to make it clear that He is the true Son of God, He proclaims that He is to be honored as God His Father is honored: "That all may honor the Son as they honor the Father" (John, V. 23). There is no room for doubt here as to what was in Christ's mind when He claimed He was the Son of God, since He claimed equal honor with God.

To show that His claim to be true God was His own genuine belief, we have only to consider how He regarded it all through His career. "Now this is eternal life, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John, XVII. 3). St. John refers to this relationship when he says: "For God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but have everlasting life" (John III. 16).

Repeatedly Christ addresses God as His Father. "Father, I will that where I am, they also whom thou hast given me may be with me; that they may see my glory which thou hast given me, because thou hast loved me before the creation of the world" (John XVII. 24).

Here Christ refers to His eternal existence,

something which pertains to Jehovah only. He made a similar claim to eternal existence when He said: "Before Abraham was made, I am." The Jews understood the significance of this statement, for they at once accused Him of blasphemy, because He made Himself to be God. Christ did not modify His claim when they accused Him of blasphemy, as He was bound to do unless He were really God.

Again, lest the fact of sonship should seem to denote inferiority of some kind, Christ declares: "Father, all my things are thine, and thine are mine" (John XVII. 10). Moreover, the power of Almighty God is reflected in Christ's commission to His Apostles: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. XXVIII. 18). What incomprehensible arrogance, nay, insanity, unless spoken by God! It is impossible to reconcile this declaration of Christ's with His perfect character if He be not very God.

But He goes even further, and states that He is one Godhead with Jehovah, asserting that God the Father and He are one and the same Deity: "I and the Father are one" (John X. 30). He does not mean that two are one, nor that two persons are one person, but that He

and the Father, each a distinct person, are one and the same God.

He again states the same truth when He bids His Apostles to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. He says in the *name,* not in the names. The three persons constitute the one Godhead, the wonderful mystery of the Trinity, which is given not for our comprehension, but for our adoration.

Christ not only identifies Himself with the Godhead, claiming equal honor with Almighty God but, moreover, consistently speaks and acts as God. Only God in His own name can forgive sins. Christ forgave sins. The Jews knew that this was a prerogative of Jehovah, and consequently when He said to the paralytic: "Thy sins are forgiven thee," the Jews said: "He blasphemeth; only God can forgive sins."

Jesus did not dispute their statement that only God can forgive sins, but proceeded to show that He was God by not only forgiving sins, but working a great miracle to prove that He was acting as God in so doing: "Whether is easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee: or to say, Arise, take up thy bed and walk?" (Mark II. 1-12) Anyone could say: "Thy sins are forgiven," but only God, by His own power, could

heal instantly a hopeless cripple. In order to show that what could not be seen, namely, forgiveness of sins, was really effected, He did by divine power what was visible and manifest and possible only to God. At His word, the paralytic rose from his bed, stood erect and leapt for joy, praising God.

The Jews were silenced. There was no possible argument for them in face of what they beheld. They were silenced, but not converted. Conversion supposes good will, a desire to know the truth and to follow it. They were not looking for the truth, but for temporal welfare.

Let us consider another prerogative of Jehovah. Only God has the right to legislate for mankind. Jesus exercised this right: "You have heard that it hath been said: Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy. But *I say to you,* love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you" (Matt. V. 43).

Again He said: "A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another" (John XIII. 34), and to show that His commandment was not mere precept or advice, He declared: "Amen, amen, I say unto you, that he who heareth my word and believeth him that sent me hath life everlasting" (John V. 24).

Previously He had said: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matt. XIX. 17). Now He says: "He who heareth my word hath everlasting life." He thus puts the same value on His commandments as on the Ten Commandments. That, surely, is speaking and acting as God. Furthermore, He said: "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John XIV. 15). That was the language of Jehovah to the Israelites. No one but God is entitled to speak with the majesty and authority that characterized Christ.

A further prerogative of God is to pass judgment on mankind. This is plainly stated by the prophet of old: "Therefore will I judge every man according to his ways, O house of Israel, saith the Lord God" (Ezech. XVIII. 30). Jesus declares that He is this judge: "The son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels: and then will he render to every man according to his works" (Matt. XVI. 27).

This title, *Son of Man,* is Christ's frequent designation of Himself. That it is synonymous with *Son of God* is evident from the following declaration of Christ, which not only shows Him to be the judge of mankind, but also the real Son of the eternal Father, Almighty God: "The Father hath given all judgment to the

Son, that all may *honor the Son as they honor the Father.* He hath given him power to do judgment because he is the son of man" (John, V. 22, 23, 27).

Here Christ unequivocally designates Himself the real Son of God, declaring that to Himself should be accorded the same honor as to God His Father. He indicates, too, why judgment will be His, namely, because He became man, being the Son of Man.

In order that it may be entirely evident that in calling Himself the Son of Man He does not in any way imply inferiority to Deity, I place here two solemn pronouncements of Christ which show that the Son of Man and the Son of God are one and the same Person: "And when the *son of man* shall come in his majesty and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty and all nations shall be gathered together before him" (Matt. XXV. 31).

Compare this declaration with the following: "The hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that have done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment" (John V. 28).

Here, in proclaiming that He is to be the judge of all mankind, Christ in one proclamation designates Himself as the Son of Man, and in the other, the Son of God. Moreover, He is assuming the prerogative of Jehovah, which is that of universal judgment. Can there possibly be any doubt, after this assumption of divine prerogative, what Christ meant in His own mind when He claimed He was God?

The Gospels teem with words and deeds of Christ which are meaningless unless He meant that He was Jehovah when He proclaimed He was God. Jehovah it was who gave the Ten Commandments. One of these concerns the Sabbath. When the Jews found fault with Christ for healing on the Sabbath, He proclaims that "the son of man is Lord of the sabbath" (Luke VI. 5). He thus identifies Himself with Jehovah, who was Lord God of the Sabbath (Exod. XX. 10).

In every conceivable way Christ makes clear what He meant when He said He was God. We must eliminate every page of the Gospels or admit that Jesus spoke and acted consistently with His claims of divinity in the truest meaning. In His own name He gave sight to the blind, health to the diseased, and life to the dead.

As Master of creation, He commanded the elements, by a word calming the storm at sea, and by His power walking on the water. He read the secrets of hearts as only God could do, and foretold the future known to God alone. What more could He have done to show what He thought in His own mind of His divine claims? He claimed He was God, He spoke as God, He acted as God. He *was* God.

The Jews had no doubt of what He thought of His claims in His own mind. When Pilate had examined Him and found no fault in Him, the Jews cried out: "We have a law, and according to the law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God" (John XIX. 7). If Christ had made Himself the Son of God in any but the divine sense, He had not been accused of blasphemy and judged deserving of death.

They had heard His language on many occasions, and knew just what He seriously claimed to be. How could they be mistaken as to what He meant when they heard these words from His lips: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and giveth life, so the Son also giveth life to whom he will. . . . He who honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father who hath sent him. Amen, amen, I say unto you that the hour

cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live" (John V. 21, 23, 25).

Even the mob about the cross knew what He meant. "He trusted in God, let him now deliver him if he will have him, for he said: I am the Son of God" (Matt. XXVII. 43). They knew that He said and meant that He was the Son of God Almighty, otherwise they would not mockingly have bidden Him to call on God to save Him.

Constantly during His ministry He had identified Himself with His eternal Father, God Almighty. When on a certain occasion Philip said to Him: "Lord, show us the Father," Jesus said to him: "Philip, he that seeth me seeth the Father also. . . . Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me? . . . Otherwise, believe for the very works' sake" (John XIV. 9, 10, 12).

On several occasions His proclamation of Godhead was so unmistakable that the Jews attempted to stone Him. On His rebuking them they made answer that He was a blasphemer because, being man, He was making Himself to be God. His ignominious and cruel death was the direct result of His divine claims. The charge brought against Him before the Roman

governor was that He made Himself to be God and was consequently guilty of blasphemy, a crime punishable by death.

Unless in His own mind He meant that He was God, it was His duty as a perfect man to set the people right, but on the contrary He maintained to the end that He was very God, Jehovah. And His passion and death were so Godlike that His very executioners were forced to cry out after His death: "Indeed, this was the Son of God."

Twenty centuries later, Rousseau was similarly impressed. "If the life and death of Socrates are those of a wise man, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God." And he added: "And the facts in the life of Socrates are not as well attested as those in the life of Jesus Christ."

Christ, therefore, claimed He was God, He acted as God, He spoke as God, He was crucified as God. In view of all this, can any mind hesitate as to what Christ meant in His own mind when He said He was God?

We know He was not an impostor because He was the most perfect man this world has known. Was He a fool? Unless He was God He was either fool or knave. There is no other class to

which He may be assigned. The most perfect man was not an impostor or a fool.

Christ was the wisest man of all mankind. His very enemies declared that never spoke man as He spoke. By a single word or phrase He turned aside or against themselves the hostile shafts aimed at him. Their greatest shrewdness and cleverest devices were laid bare by Him with marvelous simplicity. Frequently they attempted to catch Him in speech or act, only to desist finally with the conviction that it was useless.

Simple, majestic, kind, prudent, He stands out the ideal man of all time. When this ideal man proclaimed He was God in the divine sense, He is to be believed. Alone of all mankind, He could say: "Which of you can accuse me of sin?" Alone He could point to Himself as an exemplar of goodness: "Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart."

What arrogance, unless He is divine in the true sense! He is neither meek nor humble who said: "I am the way, the truth and the life," unless He be very God. He is neither meek nor humble who said: "I am the light of the world," unless He be very God. He is neither meek nor humble who said to Jehovah:

"Father, all my things are thine, and thine are mine," unless He be very God.

What arrogance is Christ's, if He be not God, to announce that "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. He that taketh not up his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me. He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. X. 37).

It is simply impossible to reconcile Christ's statements with anything short of divinity in the truest sense. No monarch, however great, could claim the whole world for his kingdom and every human being for his subject. Christ does even more than this. He claims first place in the heart of every man, besides legislating for all mankind.

But His most astounding claim was that He and Jehovah were one and the same Deity. This was out and out blasphemy unless He were divine in the truest sense. It was a dreadful shock to the Jews, who had such an exalted notion of Jehovah that they never directly pronounced His name.

No wonder they were amazed when Christ, in appearance like themselves, declared that He and the Father were one. They understood Him

to mean exactly what His words signified, for they were enraged to the point of trying to kill Him. He knew the import of His claim, and also what a demand it made on the belief of His hearers. For this reason He was very patient with them.

Quietly and kindly He said to them: "Do you say of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world: Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though you will not believe me, believe the works; that you may know and believe that the Father is in me and I in the Father" (John X. 36).

He understood He was making divine claims, and He was prepared to give divine corroboration to His claims. He did things constantly which God alone could do, and He pointed to these deeds of divine power as evidence of His divine nature. There can, therefore, be no doubt as to what Christ in His own mind meant by His claim to be God.

The whole matter resolves itself to this: Christ, the acknowledged most perfect person in the whole history of mankind, claimed to be God. Since the most perfect man can neither deceive nor be under delusion, His claim stands.

The most perfect person is neither fool nor knave. Christ would have to be either fool or knave unless He were what He claimed to be, God.

That He meant His claim to be taken in its true divine sense is evident from the fact that He died in support of it. He had nothing to gain and everything to lose by asserting His claim to be Jehovah, yet He made the claim because He was what He was.

Unless Christ be God, He is incomprehensible. Unless He be God, His whole life is not only unintelligible, but a burlesque on Deity. Are we prepared to admit that the ideal person of the human race would parody Jehovah? Yet that is the only conclusion we may arrive at unless Christ be very God.

He not only said He was God, He solemnly swore to it. Not only in speech did He maintain it, but by divine deeds He proved it. Both speech and action were sealed by His blood. If that be not conclusive, there is no value in evidence.

It is absolutely clear, therefore, that when Christ claimed to be God, He meant God in the true sense. And what such a person as Christ affirmed must be accepted, or else the best man of all time is discredited. Unless we are

prepared to relegate Jesus to the rank of fool or knave, we must accept Him as God in the true divine sense.

It is because He was God that the Church which He established is in the world today. No merely human institution could survive the assaults from without and the defects from within which the Church of Christ has endured for twenty centuries. She exists today because He is with her, as He said He would be, until the end of time. Unless she had His guarantee, and unless that guarantee were divine, she had long since perished.

The Church of Christ is a living monument to the divinity of her founder. The tiny mustard-seed planted on Calvary is now the tree of the Church Universal, whose branches give rest and protection to the wayfarer of earth on pilgrimage to eternity.

Christ became man that man in a measure might become divine. "To as many as received him, he gave the power to become the sons of God" (John I. 12). By His becoming man, we may become by adoption what He is by nature. St. Peter says that, through Jesus, God "hath given us most great and precious promises, that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature" (II Peter, I. 4).

That is why Christ came; not to give us wealth or long life or honor—He had none of these things Himself—but to make us children of God, members by adoption of the divine family. Hence He says: "I am the way and the truth and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me" (John XIV. 6). Again He declares: "I am the door, by me if any man enter in he shall be saved" (John X. 9).

This world is not the goal, but the starting-point of man. It is God's crucible for the kingdom of heaven, wherein is shown if we be gold or dross. They who, by the test of living, prove worthy of God's favor shall be partakers of His glory forever. This gives value to the meanest life, and cheer to the saddest, and hope to the most forlorn. It gives that peace which the world cannot give or take away. It makes life worth living, and is the only thing that does.

For, provided that the end of the way ushers us into the home of our Father in heaven, and into His arms, what matters everything else? Jesus says to each one of us what He said to Martha: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, although he be dead shall live" (John XI. 25).

We believe in Him when we hearken to His voice, which speaks to us by His divinely es-

tablished and guaranteed Church. "He who hears you hears me," He said when He commissioned His Church to teach mankind (Luke X. 16). He thus makes His Church His representative on earth.

Christ's mission did not end, but only began, with His ministry on earth. He came for all men to the end of the world, not merely for those who saw and heard Him in Palestine. He committed to His Church His teaching and His sacraments, and promised to abide with her always. She is the earthly pilgrim's guide and stay on the way to the heavenly Jerusalem. "We have not here a lasting city, but seek one that is to come" (Heb. XIII. 14).

Christ, in giving to us the Church, is abiding with us as in the days of old He abode with the Apostles. With Him as leader and companion, we are sure of the way and certain to arrive at the eternal goal, where we shall see Him face to face if we prove worthy, and share with Him the blessedness prepared for them that love Him.

CHRIST AND THE RATIONALISTS OF HIS DAY

It may be asked why Christ was rejected by His own people. It would seem that they should be eager to receive Him if He was what He claimed to be. They were the best judges, apparently, of what He was; they saw His wondrous deeds and heard His sublime discourses. Yet they rejected Him.

His rejection was effected by a hostile, determined and powerful minority, rather by a handful of vicious men who, being in a position of influence and power, used their resources to discredit and condemn Jesus.

But why were these leaders of the people opposed to Jesus? Partly because they confounded the prophecies of Christ's first coming in humility with His second in glory, and partly because He unveiled their vicious lives and showed them to the people as deceivers, unjust and tyrannical. They believed that they must destroy Him or be themselves destroyed. In their desperation they were blind to argument and evi-

dence and by their machinations misled the people into the rejection of the Messiah.

Christ upbraided the scribes and Pharisees for their vices and especially for their pride and hypocrisy. He showed them to the people as oppressors and deceivers, and they feared that if He prevailed they would lose their power and their prestige. That made them hate Him, as vicious men always hate the just man who discerns and flays wrongdoing. In their rage and disappointment they saw Christ by a distorted vision.

For that reason He called them blind. Having eyes they saw not, He declared, and having ears they heard not. Oh, they saw and heard, but in the same way that an opponent in a lawsuit sees and hears the evidence and arguments of the other side.

Jesus gave all the evidence that was sufficient to convince them, but He did not force them to accept it. Many did accept it. The people as a whole acclaimed Him the Messiah. They were not prejudiced, at least not to the extent of the scribes and Pharisees.

At a council of these opponents of Jesus, one of them arose and said: "Do you see that we prevail nothing? behold, the whole world is gone after Him" (John, XII. 19). The terrible

example of these misleaders of the people should give us a wholesome fear of being carried away by passion in our judgment.

In passing, let me say, Is it not a wonderful tribute to the truth of the Gospels that they narrate this rejection of Jesus by His own people? Nothing could injure the cause of Christianity more, naturally speaking, than to announce that its Founder was rejected by His own. This just in passing, and as a straw to indicate how the wind of truth blows through the pages of the sacred narrative.

Pascal, one of the keenest observers and clearest thinkers among philosophers, referring to the Gospel says: "I readily believe the history of witnesses who sealed their testimony with their death." The Evangelists gave up their lives for the truths which they recorded.

Their testimony for the most part goes directly against their own interests. They narrate how their Master and Leader was set at naught. They describe Him as the victim of the cruelty of His own people. They show Him spat upon, scourged, paraded as a fool, mock-crowned, and finally tortured to death on the cross. They tell how He was abandoned even by themselves. They show Him weak and very human in the Garden of Gethsemani, fatigued and disap-

pointed at Jacob's Well, and finally weeping at the grave of Lazarus.

The picture which they paint of their Hero is, notwithstanding these touches, such a portrait that no human being could draw it unless he were describing a reality. As said previously the portrait of Christ as given in the Gospel narrative is so far beyond the highest conception of the human mind that it never could have been given to us unless the writers had before them the very personality they were describing. "To invent a Newton," says Parker, "one would have to be a Newton himself. What man could invent a person like Jesus?"

A few ordinary men without culture or philosophy could not present to the world the most sublime character known to mankind. They simply reported what they heard and saw, and the result is the life of Christ. The words of J. J. Rousseau will here occur to the reader: "If the life and death of Socrates are those of a wise man, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God."

Our witnesses, therefore, are not only sincere, they were not only not mistaken or imposed upon, but they narrate what goes against their own interests, and besides, tell us what, if it be

not so, was a matter of impossibility for them to invent or describe.

All critics are agreed that the character and teaching of Jesus are as different and superior to all others as the sky is above the earth. That character and that teaching were not the invention of four ordinary writers. Each of the Evangelists wrote at different times and places and recorded different events peculiar to his own Gospel. Yet they all give us the same sublime portraiture.

Now if they give us a character that is unlike anything else in the world, why should they not also give us deeds that are altogether unlike the ordinary doings of the world? And they do. You cannot deny the character they present, why should you deny the deeds?

Moreover, they had no motive in describing what was not so. Rather, they had every motive for not recording the events at all. It brought on them the hostility and persecution of the powerful ones of Israel. Unless what the Evangelists tell us is the exact truth, how would they dare tell it to the very rulers whom it would offend and anger?

If it were not the exact truth in every respect, would not the scribes and Pharisees who were discredited by the narration rise up and pro-

claim against it? They never did. They could not. All the people knew the facts and that they were as recorded. The Gospel writers indict the rulers of the people, and these powerful ones reply only by threats of punishment. Nothing parallel to it has occurred in the world. Only the truth could make the writers so fearless and the rulers so fearsome.

To sum up, then, in regard to the authors of the Gospel narrative. They stand forth sincere, undeceived, disinterested, and describing events beyond their powers of invention. Every man of them suffered persecution and violent death for his testimony. They presented their narrative to the very persons who could challenge it and were interested in challenging it, but who did not challenge it. They could not, and they knew it.

Never in the history of the world were there better witnesses. Never in the annals of human tribunals was there presented more acceptable evidence. Unless, then, we wish to go against all judicial procedure, we must admit that these writers are to be believed.

Let us now look into the facts which they relate. The facts are extraordinary. That is what we should expect. As Christ was extraor-

dinary, we should expect to find His achievements so. And we do.

To be surprised at the wonderful things done by Christ is not unnatural. Jesus intended that they should excite surprise, and great surprise. That was why He did them. They were His credentials. He came as the greatest reformer ever known to mankind. He had to have wonderful credentials.

His mission was to change the ways of the world. Nothing similar was ever before or since attempted. He had to show that He was entitled to legislate for mankind. He declared He was God. He had to do things which would substantiate that claim. Instead of the miraculous character of His deeds' being a difficulty in the case, it would be a bigger difficulty if they did not have that character.

It is a strange world. Christ comes with divine credentials of His divinity and they are rejected. Yet, if He presented anything less than divine credentials, He would be doubly rejected.

Now the fact is that He carried out His divine mission. He established Christianity in the world. It is here today. We can see it before our eyes. How did He do it without divine

credentials? These credentials were the wonderful deeds recorded in the Gospel.

We shall now present for your consideration one of these deeds to show not only the divine mission of Christ, but especially the absolutely bad faith and extreme wickedness of those who sought to discredit Him.

The fact we shall consider is the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead. This fact concerned a prominent citizen of Jerusalem. It had as witnesses the very bitterest opponents of Christ. That makes a good setting for the case.

Let me introduce the evidence for this fact by an observation of M. de Broglie's in his history of the Church and the Roman Empire: "The events related in the Gospels do not belong, like the records of ancient religions, to a remote, semi-heroic, and semi-barbaric age, nor are they confined to some unknown, deserted land. It was in the bosom of advanced civilization, in the principal city of a Roman province, visited by Pompey, and described by Tacitus, that Jesus Christ preached, established His Church, and sacrificed His life. His biography has not come down to us from mouth to mouth in rhapsodies heightened by popular enthusiasm and credulity. Four simple precise narratives, agreeing in their assertions, taken down by

ocular or contemporaneous witnesses in a perfectly intelligible language, are the documents upon which the history of Jesus Christ is established."

It is then from this record, the best authenticated record in the world, that we take the following fact.

If it is shown by careful analysis that this fact is as stated, there can be no hesitation in accepting the other miraculous deeds recorded in the Gospels. If this fact is conclusively established, it proves that the miraculous is not only possible, but that it was an actual occurrence. As this is one of the greatest miracles reported in the Gospels, it follows that its confirmation removes all inherent difficulties in regard to the other miraculous deeds described in the sacred volume.

It also puts the divine seal on the mission of Jesus Christ, for this miracle was wrought by Him as a specific challenge to His opponents. Before the fact, He pointed to it as a confirmation by Almighty God of the mission that He came on earth to fulfil. This will appear very clearly in the course of our consideration.

I give here in the very words of the text the narration of the occurrence:

"Now there was a certain man sick named

Lazarus, of Bethania, of the town of Mary and Martha her sister. (And Mary was she that anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair: whose brother Lazarus was sick). His sisters therefore sent to him saying: Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. And Jesus hearing it, said to them: This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God: that the Son of God may be glorified by it.

"Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he still remained in the same place two days. Then after that, he said to his disciples: Let us go into Judea again. The disciples say to him: Rabbi, the Jews but now sought to stone thee: and goest thou thither again? Jesus answered: Are there not twelve hours of the day? If a man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world: but if he walk in the night, he stumbleth, because the light is not in him.

"These things he said: and after that he said to them: Lazarus our friend sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. His disciples therefore said: Lord, if he sleeps, he shall do well. But Jesus spoke of his death; and they thought that he spoke of the repose of sleep. Then therefore Jesus said to them plainly:

Lazarus is dead. And I am glad, for your sakes, that I was not there, that you may believe: but let us go to him. Thomas therefore, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples: Let us also go, that we may die with him.

"Jesus therefore came, and found that he had been four days already in the grave. (Now Bethania was near Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off.) And many of the Jews were come to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Martha therefore, as soon as she heard that Jesus was come, went to meet him: but Mary sat at home.

"Martha, therefore said to Jesus: Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But now also I know that whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith to her: Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith to him: I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said to her: I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, although he be dead, shall live: And every one that liveth, and believeth in me, shall not die for ever. Believest thou this? She saith to him: Yea, Lord, I have believed that thou art Christ the Son of the living God, who art come into this world.

"And when she had said these things, she

went, and called her sister Mary secretly, saying: The master is come and calleth for thee. She, as soon as she heard this, riseth quickly, and cometh to him: for Jesus was not yet come into the town: but he was still in that place where Martha had met him. The Jews therefore, who were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary that she rose up speedily and went out, followed her, saying: She goeth to the grave to weep there.

"When Mary therefore was come where Jesus was, seeing him, she fell down at his feet, and saith to him: Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. Jesus, therefore, when he saw her weeping, and the Jews that were come with her, weeping, groaned in the spirit, and troubled himself, and said: Where have you laid him? They say to him: Lord, come and see. And Jesus wept. The Jews therefore said: Behold how he loved him. But some of them said: Could not he, that opened the eyes of the man born blind, have caused that this man should not die?

"Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the sepulchre. Now it was a cave; and a stone was laid over it. Jesus saith: Take away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith to him: Lord, by this time he

stinketh, for he is now of four days. Jesus saith to her: Did not I say to thee, that if thou believe, thou shalt see the glory of God?

"They took therefore the stone away. And Jesus lifting up his eyes said: Father, I give thee thanks that thou hast heard me; and I knew that thou hearest me always; but because of the people who stand about have I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. When he had said these things, he cried with a loud voice: Lazarus, come forth. And presently he that had been dead came forth, bound feet and hands with winding bands; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said to them: Loose him, and let him go.

"Many therefore of the Jews, who were come to Mary and Martha, and had seen the things that Jesus did, believed in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees, and told them the things that Jesus had done. The chief priests therefore, and the Pharisees, gathered a council, and said: What do we, for this man doth many miracles? If we let him alone so, all will believe in him; and the Romans will come, and take away our place and nation.

"But one of them, named Caiphas, being the high priest that year, said to them: You know nothing. Neither do you consider that it is

expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this he spoke not of himself, but being the high priest of that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation. And not only for the nation, but to gather together in one the children of God, that were dispersed. From that day therefore they devised to put him to death. . . .

"But the chief priests thought to kill Lazarus also: Because many of the Jews, by reason of him went away, and believed in Jesus. And on the next day, a great multitude that was come to the festival day, when they had heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried: Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel. . . .

"The multitude therefore gave testimony, which was with him when he called Lazarus out of the grave, and raised him from the dead. For which reason also the people came to meet him, because they heard that he had done this miracle. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves: Do you see that we prevail nothing? behold, the whole world is gone after him" (John, XI, XII).

The scribes and Pharisees openly acknowl-

edged the miracle and its effect on the people. It threw them into consternation. It drove them to despair. It had the very effect on them that it should have had if true. For seeing that they were dead set against Christ and not open to conviction, it drove them to criminal action. They plotted to kill Christ, and to kill Lazarus, the living evidence of Christ's powers and claims.

You may say, Why did not the miracle convert them? And I may say, Why does it not convert those in the same class today? They, being prejudiced, read their own minds into all that Christ said and did, just as many do today. That is why I postulated a judicial and not a prejudicial attitude of mind in this consideration.

But the multitudes were converted by the miracle. They represented the common people and the common sense of the nation. And there is no sense like common sense. You may mislead a crowd if you cater to their passions and weaknesses, but you cannot mislead a crowd if you propose what is counter to their wishes and material interests.

Now Christ performed this miracle, as He said Himself in the text given above, that the people might know that He was sent by Almighty God. And His mission ran counter to

the material expectations of the people He was addressing. And they acclaimed Him and His mission, crying out with one multitudinous voice: "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

Why then did the multitude crucify Him? The multitude did not. The chiefs of the people went in and out among the people, furiously storming and threatening, and finally, by their rabid agitating, infuriated the crowd into demanding what was dictated to it. The scribes and Pharisees were the vilest agitators that ever incensed a body of unwilling men to do what they did not want to do. And it was because of this that Jesus, when dying on the cross, said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He had in mind the multitude.

Now let us take up this miracle and look into it analytically, and see if it does not carry with it every evidence of truth that a reasonable mind can require. Lazarus was a prominent man of Jerusalem, as we learn from the fact that so many of his friends were assembled to mourn his death. Moreover, his prominence is made evident by his wealth, for the Gospel tells us that Mary, his sister, anointed Jesus with right spikenard of great price and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Its value was

so great that Judas objected to it, saying: "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor?" As a penny in those days was equivalent in purchasing power to a dollar among us, we may see that Lazarus was a person of consequence. (To give an idea of the value of a penny, we have the instance of the feeding of the five thousand men, where Philip says to our Lord that two hundred pennyworth of bread would not suffice. Certainly nowadays we should say that two hundred dollars' worth of bread would hardly suffice. Also we have the instance of the parable where the wages were a penny a day.)

Bethany was a suburb of Jerusalem, about a mile and a half out. It was evidently the dwelling place of the upper classes who wished to be away from the turmoil of the town. The subject of this miraculous event was therefore a man sufficiently prominent to draw the attention of the people at large to his case.

He took sick and died. While he was dying, word was sent to Jesus. But He delayed His going to Bethany. When He arrived, He found that Lazarus was dead and buried. When He went to the grave and gave orders to take away the stone, Martha said to Him: "Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he is now of four days."

But Jesus replied: "Did I not say to thee, that if thou believe, thou shalt see the glory of God?" The fact of the death of Lazarus was, therefore certain.

The presence of the mourners is further evidence. Now these mourners were friends of the opponents of Jesus, as is clear from the fact that they immediately went to the chief priests and scribes and Pharisees and reported this resurrection. Consequently the miracle was performed in the presence of hostile witnesses. Unless it was in every respect the wonderful deed recorded, they would be the first to take exception to it. But instead of criticizing it, they are dumbfounded. Instead of denying it, they hasten to inform their influential friends about it.

And these enemies of Jesus, when they heard it, evidently took every possible measure to ascertain the truth of the matter. It concerned them more than it does modern critics. The Gospel facts never had such a scrutiny from latter day sceptical minds as it had from the sceptics of Jerusalem.

They were opposed to Jesus because His teaching showed the falsity of theirs. His candor disclosed their hypocrisy. His success meant their downfall. These were some reasons why

they were hostile to Him. They sought to discredit Him in every possible way, in order to uphold their own position and power.

For if Jesus was right, they were wrong. And to show how wrong they were, we need no reference to them by Jesus, but only the testimony of their own deeds. And one of their deeds was the very thing they planned to do now to offset this miracle of Christ. They planned to commit murder. To destroy evidence! Instead of being convinced by the miracle of Jesus, they became incensed by it, and determined on the death, not only of Lazarus, but also of Jesus.

Instead of wondering why these leaders of the Jews rejected Jesus, we should be more surprised if they did not reject Him. Light and darkness are incompatible. "He who is not with me is against me," declared our Lord. These haughty and sinful men would not be with Christ, so they set themselves against Him.

When the witnesses of the resurrection of Lazarus reported the fact to the enemies of Jesus, these latter did not show astonishment but anger. They drew no conclusion from it. It did not alter their perverse attitude.

The witnesses reported every word and act of Jesus. They told him, before performing the

miracle, Christ raised His eyes to heaven and appealed to what He was about to do as the approval of His eternal Father on His mission—"That they may know that thou hast sent me."

Christ made it a test case of the truthfulness of His claims. He appealed to it before the entire assemblage gathered there as a proof and confirmation that He was the true Son of God, come into this world to give us eternal life—"That they may know that thou hast sent me."

Then, with the same power and authority by which in the beginning the Creator called all things into existence out of nothing, He summoned the dead Lazarus back to life. The corpse, at the voice of the Creator, sprang to life, and Jesus gave to the bereaved sisters their living and loving brother.

All that and more the witnesses told the fanatical opponents of Christ. Instead of making them enter into themselves and acknowledging the hand of God in this wondrous deed, they only became more hardened and more determined against Jesus.

Do not say, gentle and broad-minded reader, that the poor men were not to blame. We can excuse a great deal, but when men deliberately plot a twofold murder, we cannot, no matter how liberal and generous we wish to be, acquit

them of downright malicious wickedness. They furnish the best proof themselves of their own perversity. They more than confirm by their own actions the condemnation pronounced against them by Jesus Christ Himself, the gentlest person that ever lived. Having received unquestionable evidence of the resurrection of Lazarus, they closed their eyes to it. They did not want evidence, they wanted His destruction. They have many disciples nowadays.

See their conduct on realizing this newest proof of Christ's power and claims: "The chief priests therefore and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said: What do we, for this man doth many miracles? If we let him alone so, all will believe in him. . . . From that day therefore they devised to put him to death. . . . The chief priests thought to kill Lazarus also, because many of the Jews, by reason of him, went away, and believed in Jesus."

All this is taken verbatim from the record as given in the text above. Peruse it again, and see for yourself the confirmation of all that I have advanced. Never was there clearer evidence for a fact, never was there bolder defiance of all that the fact signified. Mark how these men did not question the miracle. They admitted it. That is more than some opponents

of Christianity do today. And yet these enemies of our Lord had infinitely more reason for not admitting the miracle than modern sceptics.

But with all their animus against Christ and all their means of discrediting His miracles, they were not able to do so. They even had recourse to blasphemy to explain what they could not deny, and dared to assert that His deeds were the result of Satanic influence. That shows how hard they were driven.

But while malice and prejudice were thus driving the chief priests and scribes to desperate measures, common sense, the common sense of the great body of the common people, was impelling the multitude to recognize Christ as the Messiah.

Accordingly, when the populace heard that Jesus was on His way from Bethany to Jerusalem, they went out in a body to meet Him and escort Him. They had such reverence for Him that they took the very garments from their backs and laid them along the road, that not even the feet of the animal that carried Him might be soiled. In the whole history of the world, there is no demonstration of reverence and honor comparable to that.

And as He went along, the people cut down branches from the palm trees and waved them in

triumph before the King of Israel, singing meanwhile: "Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." If the miracle was not just as recorded, could it have produced that effect? And if that demonstration were not just as it is recorded, would the writers have dared to report it?

Remember, the Evangelists were contemporaries. The Gospels were heard and read by the very people who were participators in the events narrated. They had every reason to object to what was narrated, as for the most part, it recorded their own ingratitude and wrongdoing. But so true was it all that it never occurred to them to challenge its veracity.

Now if these persons who were on the ground, and saw with their own eyes all that transpired, accepted this fact of the resurrection of Lazarus, what right have we, two thousand years removed from the occurrence, to call it into question?

This Jewish multitude constituted the body of those who believed this fact. They demonstrate the third factor which we consider in weighing evidence, namely, the character of those who believed it. This Jewish multitude was an intelligent body of people; it was not interested in believing.

Rather, they and those who later accepted the

Gospel narrative were antagonistic to Christ's claims. But the clear evidence of facts convinced and converted them. No fact of history had as witnesses men harder to convince than had the miracle of the resurrection of Lazarus.

In any court of law, if a case were presented and had half the evidence for it that this fact has, could there be any question about the verdict? No honest jury would hesitate a moment. Nothing but the rankest prejudice could prevent a unanimous verdict in favor of the case.

I wish to lay special stress on the marvelous demonstration accorded to Jesus, by the people generally, shortly after the resurrection of Lazarus. Either that demonstration took place or it did not. If it took place, it was the most unqualified confirmation of the truth of the miracle. No greater proof could be conceived or required. If that demonstration did not take place, it is impossible to understand how the record could give it, since it would have met with the denial and condemnation of the very people who were concerned in it.

Any denial of the Gospel record postulates such general stultification that no man of reasonable mind can entertain it for a moment. No history of the world bears better internal and external evidence of its truthfulness than does

the Gospel record. I invite you to consider any established fact of history and see if you can find it better substantiated than this fact I have dwelt upon from the Gospels, the resurrection of Lazarus.

From this record the enemies of Jesus, by their own admission, stand guilty of one of the greatest crimes known against justice, the destruction of evidence. And in order to destroy this evidence, the resurrected Lazarus, they did not stop at murder. Nothing so brands a person with guilt as the deliberate perversion or destruction of evidence. The Jewish leaders were guilty of this very crime. They planned to kill Lazarus.

Being committed to an evil cause, they were blind to everything except their own evil purpose. As evidence of their animosity we have but to reflect on their attitude towards one of the most convincing of Christ's miracles, the cure of the man who was born blind. This event is narrated above in the chapter on miracles, but, as it is so pertinent to the present subject, I present it again, rather than refer the reader back to it. I ask a critical perusal of it.

"And Jesus passing by, saw a man, who was blind from his birth: And his disciples asked him: Rabbi, who hath sinned, this man, or his

parents, that he should be born blind? Jesus answered: Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, whilst it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am the world, I am the light of the world.

"When he had said these things, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and spread the clay upon his eyes, and said to him: Go, wash in the pool of Siloe, which is interpreted, Sent. He went therefore, and washed, and he came seeing.

"The neighbors therefore, and they who had seen him before that he was a beggar, said: Is not this he that sat, and begged? Some said: This is he. But others said: No, but he is like him. But he said: I am he. They said therefore to him: How were thy eyes opened? He answered: That man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me: Go to the pool of Siloe, and wash. And I went, I washed, and I see. And they said to him: Where is he? He saith: I know not.

"They bring him that had been blind to the Pharisees. Now it was the sabbath when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Again therefore the Pharisees asked him, how he had

received his sight. But he said to them: He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and I see.

"Some therefore of the Pharisees said: This man is not of God, who keepeth not the sabbath. But others said: How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. They say therefore to the blind man again: What sayest thou of him that hath opened thy eyes? And he said: He is a prophet.

"The Jews then did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and had received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight, and asked them, saying: Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then doth he now see? His parents answered them, and said: We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: But how he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: ask himself: he is of age, let him speak for himself.

"These things his parents said, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had already agreed among themselves, that if any man should confess him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore did his parents say: He is of age, ask himself.

"They therefore called the man again that

had been blind, and said to him: Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner. He said therefore to them: If he be a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. They said then to him: What did he to thee? How did he open thy eyes?

"He answered them: I have told you already, and you have heard: why would you hear it again? will you also become his disciples? They reviled him therefore, and said: Be thou his disciple; but we are the disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses: but as to this man, we know not from whence he is.

"The man answered, and said to them: Why, herein is a wonderful thing, that you know not from whence he is, and he hath opened my eyes. Now we know that God doth not hear sinners: but if a man be a server of God, and doth his will, him he heareth. From the beginning of the world it hath not been heard, that any man hath opened the eyes of one born blind. Unless this man were of God, he could not do any thing. They answered, and said to him: Thou wast born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out: and when he had found him, he said to him: Dost

thou believe in the Son of God? He answered, and said: Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him? And Jesus said to him: Thou hast both seen him; and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said: I believe, Lord. And falling down, he adored him" (John, IX).

The above is from an eye witness. It shows not only the malicious bad faith of the Jewish leaders, and their keen scrutiny of everything Christ did, but also that they did not and could not deny His miracles.

There are some people nowadays, superficially educated, who imagine that things could pass in those days which would never be allowed to pass now. They forget that the Gospel facts occurred, as said before, in the era of Cæsar, Augustus, Tactitus and Pliny. It was the age of ripe scholarship and keen criticism. It was the period when courts and sages and historians flourished.

The Gospel facts do not belong at all to a hazy past wherein fact and fancy blend. It is very necessary to keep this in mind.

The Gospels have undergone the severest scrutiny of scholars, and the bitterest assaults of sceptics, only to stand forth as the truest document of history. If the Gospels are not

true, farewell to all records of the past. Let me conclude with the words of DeBroglie:

"A concert of ancient testimony, a prompt diffusion, the similarity of the texts spread throughout the entire world, the conformity of the narratives with contemporaneous chronology, constitute characteristics which in their turn entitle the Gospels to rank among the authentic monuments of the past. Criticism can exact no more. We know Jesus Christ through His disciples John and Matthew, and their companions Luke and Mark. Have we any other knowledge of Alexander or Augustus than that furnished us by their companions in arms or their courtiers?

"Because the Gospel facts pertain to faith, and carry with them a certain order of moral consequences, is that any reason for rejecting, in regard to them, all the ordinary rules of human judgment? We ask no other favor for the Gospel than that of being judged by the usual tests applied by science and erudition."

THE RESURRECTION

The Resurrection, like the Virgin Birth, is a stumbling block to modernists.

The Resurrection is a miracle. And since, according to them, a miracle is out of question, they attempt various explanations of the Resurrection, which strip it of its miraculous or supernatural character.

Let it be said at once that if the Resurrection of the dead Christ was not a physical fact, Christianity is false. There is no alternative. The Resurrection was the main argument for the credibility of Christianity. It was to the Resurrection that Christ Himself appealed as the great proof that His mission was divine. It was to the Resurrection that the Apostles appealed in presenting Christianity to the world. It was the Resurrection that converted the pagan world to the religion of the Crucified. It was not a figurative Resurrection, not a spiritual rebirth nor any other interpretation of the Resurrection that formed the basis of belief in the divine religion of Christ, but the real physical

Resurrection of the crucified Christ. Unless the Resurrection was a miracle, it would not have been a sign and proof of Christ's divine mission.

They who would strip Christianity of the miraculous must tear out every page of the Gospels and deprive the religion of Christ of the one thing which gives it value. For the very quality that gives Christianity its worth is that its assurances are divine and therefore absolutely certain. Miracle is the seal of divinity. A man, a sage, a human organization may advise or direct or promise, but can give no assurance of certainty. Christianity's assurances are those of God Himself, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. That is why Christianity got a foothold in the world. If it gave only human credentials, it had never taken root in humanity. It had to show itself divine or else it had withered after Calvary.

Supernatural signs were absolutely necessary for its introduction into the world. Unless miracles had established its credibility and thus corroborated its teaching, it had never received adherents. For its teaching ran counter to the tendencies of fallen nature. It obliged man to control his passions rather than to yield to them. It obliged man to set at naught what the world most highly valued. In many cases it obliged

man to give up even life itself. How could such a religion gain adherents unless a sign from heaven showed that it was from above?

Supernatural signs were as necessary to the establishment of Christianity as air and water to a plant. The religion of Christ spoke to man with the authority of God. To do this it had to show that it was of God. Consequently no merely human seal could designate it divine. It had to be stamped with a supernatural mark.

As said previously, Christianity's establishment without miracles would be a greater miracle than the Resurrection itself. They who reject miracles and Christianity are at least consistent. But they who accept Christianity and reject miracles are absolutely inconsistent. It should be as plain as day that a religion which made the claims of Christianity would be an impossibility without a sign from heaven to confirm it. Christ realized this when He pointed to His miraculous deeds in confirmation of His mission.

Now the Resurrection was His great sign. Unless it were a real resurrection of a really dead man it would be no confirmation at all. Christ distinctly foretold His Resurrection and its prophecy was known to all. The Jews took

every precaution against it, but on the third day He arose from the dead as He foretold.

It was to this supernatural occurrence that the Apostles appealed when preaching the religion of Christ. And in the very city where Christ was crucified and buried the Resurrection was given as the proof of their divine mission. St. Peter's first sermon was an appeal to the Resurrection, with the result that three thousand Jews became followers of the Crucified in the city of the crucifixion. "The author of life you killed, whom God hath raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses" (Acts III. 15). There is nothing figurative or mythical about that declaration.

St. Paul likewise based his claims for credence on the Resurrection. "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen again. And if Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain; yea and we are found false witnesses of God" (I Cor. XV. 13). It would be impossible to put the matter more flatly than that.

St. Paul was appealing to a supernatural fact to justify a supernatural mission. Nothing could be more logical. No demonstrator of modern times could proceed more reasonably or scientifically. He was addressing himself to

sceptics, to men who measured every word he spoke, and who were ready to take him up on any false statement. They did not deny the Resurrection, but they tried to stop him from preaching it.

The Resurrection was their condemnation. But having committed themselves to an evil course they persisted in it. Not all, however. By the very first sermon on the Resurrection three thousand became converts.

When we reflect on what conversion meant at that time, we can see that the Resurrection must have been firmly demonstrated. Converts in those days were ostracized, imprisoned, scourged, exiled, stoned to death. Those men were not different from us. They did not renounce everything and follow a religion different from that of their fathers without good reason. The reason was the Resurrection.

The Jews were the most tenacious of all people with regard to their religion. Moreover, in confessing Christ they had to confess that they were His executioners, for it was they who forced Pilate to sentence Him to the shame of the cross. Unless the Resurrection was a fact they had never passed judgment on themselves and embraced the cause of Him whom they had branded as a malefactor. Yet, in thou-

sands, they adored as God Him whom in their blindness they had proclaimed a blasphemer because He claimed He was God.

And what caused this reversal? The Resurrection. They were not credulous. It is doubtful if there were ever more hostile or sceptical people than the scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees.

On a certain occasion when Jesus plainly stated that He was God, they took up stones to stone Him. They understood what He meant, that He claimed to be Almighty God, Jehovah, for when He said to them: "Many good works have I shewed you from my Father, for which of these works do you stone me?" they answered: "For a good work we stone thee not, but because thou being a man makest thyself God."

There are some today who affect to believe that Christ did not really mean to claim that He was God, in the true sense. But the sceptics of Christ's own day were in a better position to know what He meant than their modern brethren. They knew He meant to declare that He was Jehovah, otherwise they had not accused Him of blasphemy.

Christ fully realized the magnitude of His claims, and consequently made all allowance for the slowness of His hearers to believe Him.

But He did not, therefore, at all modify or retract His claims. On the contrary He persisted in them. "Do you say that I blaspheme because I said I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not, but if I do, though you will not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in the Father."

They asked Him for a sign that He was from the Father, that He was God. It was then that He gave the Resurrection as the sign, declaring to them, as only God could, that He was to be crucified and buried and that on the third day He was to rise again. This sign was so well known to them that after the crucifixion they went to Pilate to ask a guard for the tomb, stating that He had proclaimed that He was to rise from the tomb on the third day.

The Jews, therefore, knew that Christ spoke of a real physical resurrection. They did not ask for a guard to take precautions against a figurative or mythical resurrection.

The Gospel * facts do not belong to legendary history, but are the most authentic and genuine historical document of all times. Christ is a fact, the Resurrection is a fact, Christianity is a fact. Christianity without the Resurrection,

* See *The Credentials of Christianity*, by the author.

as said repeatedly, is a greater miracle than the Resurrection. There is no escape from this conclusion. We must remember that the Resurrection was preached to as keenly intellectual a body of people as ever lived. It was a thing intimately affecting their lives and their outlook on life. It was something which entailed the most serious consequences.

Accordingly we may be certain that it was not accepted without challenge. They to whom it was preached were interested in opposing it because it made them guilty of the greatest miscarriage of justice in the history of mankind. Notwithstanding this, it was accepted in the very city and by the very people who had cried out, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" And accepting it meant the greatest sacrifice and renunciation known to man. Yet despite this, on the first day of the preaching of the Resurrection three thousand joined the standard of the cross, and on the day following five thousand more enrolled themselves as followers of the Crucified. Soon, doubtless, most of the people would have believed, had not the leaders of the Jews used the same vile means to prevent the Resurrection from being preached that they had employed to discredit Christ and bring about His crucifixion.

Yet, spite of opposition and of the sacrifices inherent in the adoption and practise of the Christian religion, the foundation of Christianity was laid in the very place and among the very people who had rejected its Founder and crucified Him. Unless the Resurrection was a fact we have in the establishment of Christianity, I repeat, a greater miracle than the Resurrection.

As a background, therefore, for the Resurrection, we have the following incontrovertible facts: The Gospel record is the most authentic document of history; Christ *foretold* His Resurrection; the Jews *knew* that He foretold it; the opponents of Christ were as sceptical as any today; the *death* of Christ was certified to by the Roman governor; the Resurrection was proclaimed in the very city where it occurred and to the very people who were instrumental in Christ's death; the first preaching of the Resurrection converted thousands to the new Faith, and was in a fair way to convert the people at large had not the hostile leaders imprisoned, scourged, exiled or killed those who preached it.

The sole argument advanced for the new religion was the Resurrection. Christ's teaching opposed the evil inclinations of man's heart and the pride of man's intellect. To win the sub-

mission of man's heart and mind to Christ's exalted standard of morality, and to the sublime and incomprehensible truths which He revealed, required a credential so divine that there could be no question about the divinity of His mission.

Let us now examine into the Resurrection,* considering it as a jury would weigh evidence in a court of law. The first and most important thing about a witness is his character, his reputation for veracity. Our witnesses for the Resurrection are men who died for their testimony. A man does not die for a falsehood. Our witnesses had nothing to gain but everything to lose by testifying to the Resurrection. The Gospels which record their testimony are now admitted by the most scholarly critics to be the truest document of history. We have, then, witnesses of the highest repute.

Before the Resurrection the Apostles were ordinary men of the peasant type. This appears from the testimony of the judges at the first trial of the Apostles: "Now seeing the constancy of Peter and John, understanding that they were illiterate and ignorant men, they wondered" (Acts, IV). They were so cowardly that they all ran away when Jesus was sentenced to death.

* Much of what follows is from *The Credentials of Christianity*, by the author.

Yet after His death, they courted imprisonment, stripes and death. What caused that transformation? The Resurrection.

They who before were in hiding for fear of the Jews, now went boldly among them and proclaimed themselves the followers of Christ. Even before their judges, they stood up bravely and calmly and delivered their message. They were sentenced to be scourged for preaching the Resurrection, but they rejoiced to receive stripes for Christ, and went on preaching the Resurrection.

They were not fanatics. Read the Acts of the Apostles through and see if you can find anywhere in history more calm, better tempered, or more evenly balanced characters. But they were crusaders. They were the first crusaders, and never men gave their all as they did for the cross of Christ and for Him who died on it.

Read this incident, taken from Acts, Chapter V:

"Then went the officer with the ministers and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, saying: Commanding we commanded you that you should not teach in this name: and behold

you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine: and you have a mind to bring the blood of this man upon us.

"But Peter and the Apostles, answering said: We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers has raised up Jesus, whom you put to death, hanging him upon a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be prince and saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins; and we are witnesses of these things, and the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to all that obey him.

"When they had heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they thought to put them to death. But one of the council rising up, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law respected by all the people, commanded the men to be put forth a little while; and he said to them: Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do, as touching these men.

"For before these days rose up Theodas, affirming himself to be somebody, to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain: and all that believed him, were scattered, and brought to nothing. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the enrolling, and drew away the people

after him, he also perished: and all, even as many as consented to him, were dispersed.

"And now therefore I say to you, refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught: but if it be of God, you cannot overthrow it, lest perhaps you be found even to fight against God. And they consented to him.

"And calling in the apostles, after they had scourged them, they charged them that they should not speak at all in the name of Jesus, and they dismissed them. And they indeed went from the presence of the council rejoicing, that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus. And every day they ceased not, in the temple, and from house to house, to teach and preach Christ Jesus" (Acts V. 33).

Could men not absolutely sure of their mission act in that manner? What had they to gain? Nothing except persecution, punishment, exile, death. What had they to lose? Everything, except the truth. Now men do not adhere even to a good cause unless they have strong incentives. Why then should men adhere to this condemned cause?

The Jewish authorities condemned it. The Roman government condemned it. The pas-

sions of men condemned it. The pride of men condemned it. The convenience of men condemned it. The customs and traditions of men condemned it. Why should a few illiterate and ignorant men advocate it, be zealous for it, suffer for it, die for it? Because it was true. The Resurrection was a fact.

And it was because the Resurrection was true that those few illiterates triumphed over the sages of Greece and Rome. It was because it was true that those few weaklings conquered the Roman Empire and made the world Christian.

Which is more incomprehensible, the Resurrection, or the result of the Resurrection, Christianity?

If Christ is God, the Resurrection is the most natural thing in the world. If not, it is the most incomprehensible and impossible. If the Resurrection is true, Christianity, the result of the Resurrection, is the most natural thing in the world. If not, it is the most unbelievable and impossible. But we are dealing with facts, stubborn things. The fact is, we have Christianity, the result of the Resurrection. We cannot deny that. Neither can we evade the cause of it, the Resurrection.

But have we really that fact, Christianity as the result of the Resurrection? Have we indis-

putable evidence that in consequence of the Resurrection the religion of Christ rapidly conquered the pagan world? We have the very best evidence ever presented for a fact.

For fear you may distrust Christian testimony, we shall begin by calling to the witness stand the most approved Roman writers, acknowledged everywhere as the highest type of pagan historians. These writers are classic in the world of literature, and not being Christians, their evidence cannot be suspected of favoring the Christian cause. First we shall prove the rapid establishment of Christianity, and then that it was due solely to the Resurrection.

Our first witness is Tacitus. In the *Annals,* Book XV, Chap. 44, he states that the Christian religion originated in Judea, while Pontius Pilate was procurator there, under the Emperor Tiberius; that Christ suffered under the same Pilate; that, spite of this condemnation by Roman authority, the religion of Christ had spread to such an extent that in Rome itself it numbered a vast multitude.

They were so numerous in the time of Nero, 64 A.D., that Tacitus says explicitly that "This religion overran not Judea alone, the country of its birth, but Rome itself." By the testimony, therefore, of this non-Christian, we see what was

the result of the Resurrection even in far off pagan Rome.

Pliny was the Roman governor of the province of Bithynia. In his letter to the Emperor Trajan, a few years after the death of the last Apostle, he states that there is a numerous and well organized body of Christians in that remote province; that the religion flourished not only in the cities, but also in the villages and the open country; that the pagan temples were in consequence deserted and the sacrifices discontinued (Plin. *Ep.* Lib. X, 97).

So much for non-Christian evidence. When we come to Christian documents, whose authenticity is certain, we are simply overwhelmed with testimony to the rapid extension of the religion of Christ.

Justin, who wrote an apology to the Roman Emperor in behalf of the persecuted Christians, states in his book of Dialogues that the name of Jesus was known throughout the world (*Dial. c. Tryph.* n. 117). Justin himself was martyred for the religion he defended so nobly by his writings. He was born 100 A.D., when the last Apostle was still living. He was a pagan until his thirtieth year, which makes his testimony all the more remarkable.

It may not be out of place to give here his

own reason for his conversion, as it throws a light on the effect of the Resurrection: "When I was a disciple of Plato, hearing the accusations made against the Christians, and seeing them intrepid in the face of death and of all that men fear, I said to myself that it was impossible that they should be living in evil and in the love of pleasure" (*II Apol.* 18. 1).

After his conversion, he said: "I, too, expect to be persecuted and to be crucified" (*II Apol.* 3). In the year 165 he was scourged and beheaded (Migne, *P. G.* VI, 1565).

Tertullian, who was born about A.D. 160, a pagan until middle age, addressing the Roman Emperor, says: "We are but of yesterday, and we fill all that is yours; your cities, your islands, your military posts; your boroughs, your council-chambers and your camps; your tribes, your corporations; the palace, the senate, the forum: your temples alone do we leave to you" (*Apolog.* c. 37). In his book against the Jews, he says that inhabitants of Africa, Spain and Gaul and Brittany, Sarmatia, Dacia, Germania and Scythia had embraced Christianity (*Adv. Jud.* c. 7). This was written about the year 200.

Is it any wonder that such a result drew from Renan himself the following remark: "In a hundred and fifty years the prophecy of Jesus

was accomplished. The grain of mustard-seed which had become a tree began to cover the world" (Brueckhart, *Dub. Rev.,* Oct., 1880). And what was it all? What, but the result of the Resurrection!

There is the *result,* therefore, the great *effect.* It had a *cause.* Every effect must have a cause. That is logic. Opponents of Christianity have tried to assign every and any cause except the real cause, the Resurrection, but all in vain. The effect is supernatural and so is the *cause.* And that supernatural cause was the Resurrection.

In order to clinch the case beyond all rebuttal, we shall now consider one or two points which will leave us absolutely no doubt that the rapid and widespread acceptance of Christianity was due to the divine character stamped on it by the Resurrection.

The following facts should be kept in mind: That the men who preached Christianity were naturally altogether unfitted for so great an undertaking and achievement; that the religion itself was opposed to all the ways and interests of the world, and that even the greatest men could not secure its acceptance unless they were divinely supported; that its acceptance meant the greatest sacrifice to human nature ever re-

corded in history; and that finally the period of its establishment was such as to be most radically opposed to everything about it.

It is simply impossible to assemble such an array of difficulties against any enterprise of man. If any one of these obstacles confronted a human undertaking, it would fail. All of them combined did not prevent the successful establishment of Christianity. If that is not a result which shows the truth of the Resurrection, and consequently of Christianity, there is no use reasoning about anything.

When we consider how the great sages of the world have at times endeavored to introduce among mankind some new way of life, and have failed, with all their learning and prestige and their appeal to the interests and passions of man, we can realize what the triumph of Christianity means, with its poor natural equipment and the tremendous odds against it.

Other religions and cults have got a following by pandering to pride or passion, but Christianity opposed pride and passion. Other religious systems have got a foothold by offering human inducements. Christianity, on the contrary, not only offered no human inducements, but frankly declared the opposite.

Other creeds have thrived in this soil or that,

among this nation or that, being sustained by national, racial or martial glory. But Christianity was exiled from its birthplace, Judea, and as a foreigner and stranger and an enemy conquered the proudest and most powerful empire the world has known. Not confined to one nation or race, it spread over the known world, and made out of paganism our Christian civilization.

Now that victory is eloquent. It is impossible not to hear its message. It declares in reason's language that the establishment of the religion of Christ was not a human but a divine achievement. It is God talking to us, as much as His omnipotence speaks to us by the magnitude and order of the universe. The same divine power that made the world established this unworldly religion in the world.

Never has any enterprise known to man presented such credentials for acceptance as Christianity. And of these, the principal one is that to which Christ Himself appealed when He was asked for a sign:

"The son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again" (Luke, XXIV. 7).

This implies miracles, you may say. It does.

If Christ must be listened to and obeyed as

God, He must also do the things of God. If He tells us His is the way to eternal life, He must prove it by some divine manifestation.

A miracle, therefore, is not only proper, but it is demanded by the very nature of the case. The Resurrection was that miracle.

We shall now proceed to show that the Apostles based their mission solely on the truth of the Resurrection; and that considering the ideas and morality promulgated by Christianity, and the extreme sacrifices and sufferings which its acceptance entailed, it never could have been established except by divine power.

To bring about the worship of one crucified as a malefactor by order of a Roman governor was an impossibility without divine intervention. The worship of the Crucified was established, as we know from Roman documents. The Resurrection was the divine intervention which made that establishment possible.

We shall, therefore, proceed to show, in the first place, that the Apostles based their mission solely on the Resurrection. Afterwards, we shall demonstrate that without a miraculous sign like the Resurrection, it was utterly impossible for a religion inculcating the ideas and morals of Christianity, to gain a foothold in the world.

A complete moral and social transformation,

such as was effected after the death of Christ, requires an explanation.

We begin with St. Paul. Weigh well his words, as he addresses the people of Corinth:

"Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you have received and wherein you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast after what manner I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain.

"For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received: how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures: and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures: and that he was seen by Cephas, and after that by the eleven: then was he seen by more than five hundred brethren at once: of whom many remain until this present, and some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen by James, then by all the apostles: and last of all, he was seen also by me, as by one born out of due time.

"For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace in me hath not been void, but I have labored more abundantly than all they: yet not I, but the

grace of God with me: for whether I, or they: so we preach, and so you have believed.

"Now if Christ be preached that he rose again from the dead, how do some among you say, that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen again. *And if Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain:* yea, and we are found false witnesses of God: because we have given testimony against God, that he hath raised up Christ, whom he hath not raised up, if the dead rise not again.

"For if the dead rise not again, neither is Christ risen again. And if Christ be not risen again, your faith is vain, for you are yet in your sins. Then they also, that are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished. *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now Christ is risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep"* (I Cor. XV).

St. Paul was an exception to the Apostles generally in this respect, that he was a man of learning. Not only was he learned, but he was also a genius. There are no loftier conceptions in all literature than those to be found in his writings. He was the strongest opponent of

Christianity in the beginning, and its greatest champion eventually.

Now this Apostle, in presenting his case to the Jews and pagans, does not touch upon philosophical or ethical reasons for the creed he advocates, but on the Resurrection only. He makes that the basis of everything. It is the motive for accepting the creed and the reason that the creed is true.

Not like Plato or Socrates does he proceed, but like the Master Himself who spoke with power. Paul points to the Resurrection, and in view of that, sweeps aside every argument and obstacle. He has no other ground to stand on. "If Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

If any of the preachers of Christianity were qualified to spread the Gospel by human means, it was Paul. Yet we find him insisting exclusively on the one great fact, the Resurrection. When the Jews, who were angered at the number of converts he was making, had him seized and taken before the Roman governor, Felix, on false charges, he rose up in the court of judgment and said to Felix: "Let these men themselves say if they found in me any iniquity,

except it be for this one voice only that I cried, standing among them, concerning the resurrection of the dead" (Acts, XXIV. 20).

It is true that once St. Paul had gained converts to Christianity by the Resurrection, he appealed to them in various other ways to confirm them in the faith and its practice. All the other Apostles did likewise. But the basic argument for the faith was the Resurrection.

St. Peter, the head of the Apostles, uses no other argument but that of the Resurrection: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, . . . this same being delivered up, . . . you, by the hands of wicked men, have crucified and slain. *Whom God hath raised up, . . . This Jesus hath God raised again, whereof all we are witnesses. . . .* Therefore, let all the house of Israel know most certainly, that God hath made both Lord and Christ, this same Jesus whom you have crucified. . . . They therefore that received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls" (Acts, II).

That was the first sermon preached after the Resurrection. It was in the very city of the Resurrection. Its theme was the Resurrection.

The first converts were the fruits of the Resurrection.

A few days later, "Peter and John went up into the temple, . . . and a certain man who was lame from his mother's womb . . . asked to receive an alms. . . . But Peter said: Silver and gold I have none, but what I have I give thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth arise and walk, . . . and he leaping up stood and walked . . . and all the people saw him walking and praising God. . . . Peter said to the people: Ye men of Israel, why wonder ye at this, . . . as if by our power we had made this man to walk. . . . The God of our fathers hath glorified his Son Jesus, whom you indeed delivered up, . . . *whom God hath raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses*" (Acts, III).

The next day they were seized and brought before the Jewish council. The high priest asked them:

"By what power, or by what name, have you done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said to them: Ye princes of the people, and ancients, hear: Be it known to you all, that by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, *whom God hath*

raised from the dead, even by him this man standeth here before you whole.

"Now seeing the constancy of Peter and John, understanding that they were *illiterate and ignorant men,* they wondered, saying: What shall we do to these men? for indeed *a known miracle* has been done by them, to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. *But that it may be no further spread among the people,* let us threaten them that they speak no more in this name.

"And they charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answering, said: If it be just in the sight of God to hear you rather than God, judge ye. For we can not but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts, IV).

On that day five thousand more were added to the believers in the Resurrection. It was the Resurrection that was foremost in their minds in all their preaching and acts.

See how, in choosing a successor to Judas, they had the Resurrection before them. At the first assemblage after the Resurrection, "Peter rising up said: The Scripture must be fulfilled concerning Judas, who was numbered with us, wherefore of these men who have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus came in and went out amongst us, beginning from the

baptism of John, until the day wherein *he was taken up from us,* one of these must be made a *witness with us of his resurrection"* (Acts, I).

These acts and words are not taken from a book of fables, or myths, nor from the hazy past. The document which records them belongs to a most enlightened period of civilization. It was written in the same era that Tacitus gave us his history and Cæsar his *Commentaries,* and its genuineness and truth are better established than the works of either Tacitus or Cæsar.

It cannot be said too often, that the ripest scholarship of the world has scrutinized these documents and the verdict of the learned world is that, unless we accept them, we must reject history altogether. Some persons reject the sacred records because they report the miraculous. But they fail to see that such a result as the establishment of Christianity without the miraculous fact of the Resurrection is as great a miracle as any recorded in Scripture. It is important to keep this in mind.

From the words and deeds, therefore, of the very preachers of Christianity, we have demonstrated that they made the Resurrection the basis and the motive of faith in Jesus Christ. On the Resurrection solely they relied for the acceptance of the new creed. The establishment,

therefore, of Christianity is the result of the Resurrection.

This will be further evident to any fair and judicial mind from the following considerations:

First, the Apostles would be the biggest fools in history to devote their labors and their lives to preaching the Resurrection if they did not have certain evidence of it. What were they to gain by preaching the Resurrection? Not riches, not power, not comfort, not fame, not anything that induces men to devote themselves to a cause.

But, on the other hand, they preached the Resurrection even though they were persecuted, exiled, imprisoned, scourged, and finally put to death. It cost them everything that man values, yet they paid the price. It deprived them of everything that man yearns for, yet they gladly endured the deprivation. And why? Because the Resurrection was true. Let us hear them speak

"We would not have you ignorant, brethren, of our tribulation, that we were pressed out of measure above our strength, so that we were weary even of life. But we had within ourselves the answer of death, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, who raiseth the dead" (II Cor. I. 8).

"Herod the king stretched forth his hands to afflict some of the Church, and he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword" (Acts, XII).

"Behold the men whom you put in prison are teaching the people. Then went the officer and having brought them set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, saying: Commanding we commanded you that you should not teach in this name; and behold you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine. But Peter and the apostles answering said: We ought to obey God rather than men. *The God of our fathers hath raised up Jesus,* whom you put to death, and we are witnesses of these things. When they had heard these things, they thought to put them to death. After they had scourged them, they charged them that they should not speak at all in the name of Jesus; and they dismissed them. And they indeed went from the presence of the council, *rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer* reproach for the name of Jesus" (Acts, V).

Were they fanatics, men blinded by their own infatuation? Fanatics do not speak with calmness and serenity. Fanatics do not establish an organization that endures throughout the ages, and numbers among its adherents the

wisest and best men that have ever lived. Fanatics do not agree one with another, and preach the very same doctrine constantly and in various parts of the world. Fanatics preach themselves, their own ideas, their own vain imaginings.

But these men never preached themselves. Their own personality is ever in the background. How came it that without any human inducement they all started to preach the same theme at the same time and in the same way? Because they were all preaching an objective truth, which was one and the same, the Resurrection. A few men may be fanatics and deluded, but a band of men, at the same time, and on the same subject, and in a tranquil, firm, constant and patient manner—never!

"Apprehending Paul and Silas, they brought them to the rulers and said: These men disturb our city, being Jews, and preach a fashion which it is not lawful for us to receive, being Romans. And the magistrates rending off their garments commanded them to be beaten with rods, and when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison" (Acts, XVI).

That was the treatment they received, and it was that way everywhere and always with the Apostles, and it continued that way until a violent death ended their labors and sufferings.

What fools they were unless they had evidence of the Resurrection!

There is a difference between the stubborn and fanatical man who is insane, or infatuated with his own notions, and the man who perseveringly suffers in behalf of an idea or cause that is not his own, nor to his advantage. All the freaks and extremists of history have been persons carried away by their own importance or advantage. They suffered and sometimes died for their own notions. That, at its best, is individual sincerity. It does not indicate any objective truth. It is a mere subjective condition. Such men we pity, or, if they threaten detriment to the community, we repress them. In that case, a person is a martyr to himself, to his own ideas.

Now that was not the case with the Apostles. They were martyrs in the true sense. They were witnesses not to their own ideas but to Christ's. A martyr means a witness. The Apostles were witnesses to something that was not of their own devising or creation, but to an objective fact, the Resurrection, and to the doctrine of the risen Christ. They were no more interested in it than anybody else, unless it were a true objective reality. In that case, the Resurrection was not merely an isolated fact, but a *sign* and a *creden-*

tial of Christ and His mission. As such they proclaimed it.

Christ had said: "He who confesses me before men, him will I confess before my Father in heaven"; "He who loses his life for my sake shall find it"; "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul"; "I am the resurrection and the life, he who believeth in me shall not die forever."

The Resurrection made all that and thousands of other teachings of Christ absolutely true. It was the great motive for credibility in Christ. The Resurrection caused the Apostles to base their lives on His doctrine. The Resurrection proves that the Apostles were not fools, but the wisest of men. For their whole enterprise was founded on His words who rose from the dead and who was consequently what He claimed to be, the true Son of God.

That explains the life and labors and sufferings of the Apostles. That enables us to understand this sublime ejaculation of Paul: "Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? or nakedness? or danger? or persecution? or the sword? . . . But in all these things we overcome, because of him that hath loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels,

nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. VIII).

And none of these things did separate the disciple from the Master. The servant did not look for better treatment than his Lord had. And so he was able at the end to say triumphantly: "For I am even now ready to be sacrificed, and the time of my dissolution is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. As to the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord the just judge will render to me in that day, and not only to me, but to them also that love his coming" (II Tim. IV).

That was the statement of a strong, brave, sensible man in the presence of death. It is the utterance not only of subjective sincerity, but of objective truth. What he said, before he went forth from his prison to be killed for Christ, all the other Apostles said under the same or similar circumstances.

If the Resurrection were not true, the twelve sanest, most upright, most constant and most consistent men in the world were fools. But consistency, uprightness and sanity do not spring

from a disordered imagination. The Resurrection was, therefore, a reality.

We now proceed to show that, even if the Apostles wished to promulgate the Resurrection as the chief credential of Christianity, they could not have done so if it were not true. This is the *second* consideration I present to corroborate the foregoing thesis.

Before giving this demonstration, it may be said that the proofs already given, or any one of them, are conclusive evidence for the truth of the Resurrection, but when we take the various proofs cumulatively they present overwhelming evidence. But because there are various viewpoints on any subject, this further evidence which will be presented is given, in order to meet every phase of mind and every form of objection.

Hence we say, *in the second place,* the Apostles could not make the Resurrection the basis of the establishment of Christianity if they wished to, unless the Resurrection were true. For, to begin with, they would have to concur in the fraud they were to proclaim, and agree openly to announce it in the presence of the magistrates and people of Jerusalem, and to suffer opposition, ignominy, exile, stripes and death for a *lie,* the establishment of which, even

if they succeeded, would bring them nothing that men care for, but rather everything from which men ordinarily shrink. Could the perpetration of an infamous fraud induce normal men to lose everything and suffer everything, even death?

And even if it could, their attempt to propagate it would never have made any headway. Truth succeeds in spite of obstacles and persecution. Fraud cannot succeed *permanently,* even with every human contrivance and under the most favorable circumstances. In the case of the Resurrection, all the circumstances were most unfavorable to fraud. Therefore the Apostles could not have propagated a fraudulent Resurrection even if they wished.

If the Resurrection were a fraud, it would have been necessary for the chief plotters to deceive the many disciples who declared they had seen the risen Saviour. At one time as many as five hundred were assembled when Jesus stood in their midst. Now, unless they really beheld the risen Lord, they would not have so announced the fact, and in doing so, suffer all the persecution which the chief plotters incurred. The fact of the Resurrection was as astounding to them as it is to us. They were as sceptical as any of us. Yet, in consequence of what they be-

held with their own eyes, they became believers in the religion of Christ.

It was simply impossible for the Apostles to work off a fraud on so many witnesses, especially when the consequences of the fraud entailed unheard-of sacrifices. Therefore, even if they wished, the Apostles could not proclaim the Resurrection unless it were true.

Moreover, if the Resurrection were not true, it would be necessary to impose a fraud on people most hostile to its reception. The Jews were the bitterest enemies of Christ, and the pagans were most antagonistic to His whole mission. Yet these were the people whom the poor, simple fishermen of Galilee were to make their dupes. There is nothing more preposterous in all history.

The Jew did not give up his tradition, nor did the pagan give up his idolatry and vices, without a struggle. Yet, on the first sermon on the Resurrection, three thousand Jews became converts. And after a short period, the pagan converts were so many in all parts of the Roman Empire that Tertullian could say in his *Apology* to the Emperor: "If we were to withdraw from you, the Empire would be a desert" (*Apolog.* c. 37).

And Pliny: "The contagion of Christian

superstition is not confined to the cities; it has invaded the villages and the country, and has taken possession of persons of every age, rank and sex. Our temples are almost entirely abandoned, and the religious ceremonies neglected" (*Epis.* no. 97). A fraud never did that.

The Apostle sums up the matter when he says: "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews indeed a stumbling-block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. . . . The foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the strong" (I Cor. 1. 23).

To suppose for a moment that the Apostles could establish a religion based on the Resurrection without giving the clearest proof of the Resurrection, makes a bigger demand on our credulity than the Resurrection itself. For the religion based on the Resurrection obliged men to place their lives on a supernatural foundation.

Now why should men build on such a foundation unless it was certain? One man might be

deceived, or ten men, but not millions of men. Ten millions might be deceived if there was something in the new religion which flattered human pride or passion.

But it was just the reverse. The doctrine of the Christian faith obliged the intellect to bow down before incomprehensible truths, and the passions to be controlled by the loftiest morality. And besides, Christianity entailed in most cases the greatest sufferings and sacrifices ever demanded of mankind. Unless, therefore, the Resurrection was clearly demonstrated to the first believers and confirmed by miracles, the religion of Christ never would have gained adherents.

The Resurrection was the sign pointed out by Christ as the credential of His divine mission. The Resurrection was the credential presented by the Apostles in preaching the doctrine of Christ. As Christianity was actually established, and that by reason of the Resurrection, it follows logically that, as the establishment of Christianity is a fact beyond human power to accomplish, so is the Resurrection a fact, divine and true.

In order to show still more evidently the miraculousness of the establishment of Christianity, we shall consider briefly what it entailed on its followers. This consideration, by showing the

utter impossibility of establishing Christianity by human means, will confirm the truth of the Resurrection. A divine effect demands a divine cause. It will be made evident from the following facts that the conversion of the Roman Empire was a divine effect, consequently its cause, the Resurrection, was divine, and true.

To become a Christian in the Roman Empire meant a complete reversal of all one's national, social and personal ideas, customs and morals. No such complete reversal has occurred in the history of mankind before or since. If this change were brought about by sages or by powerful rulers or by the force of arms or by worldly inducements, it would still be the most wonderful change ever recorded among men. Indeed, with all the above named agencies, it could not be done. Time and again, superior and more powerful governments have endeavored to change the national character of a weaker people, but without success.

Now Christianity, with no such agencies whatsoever, not only changed a nation and its most fundamental characteristics, but changed an empire, the greatest the world has known, and transformed it radically and permanently. That was using the weak things of this world to confound the strong. It was God's work, not man's.

Man was but the instrument. This will appear presently.

There was, humanly speaking, no proportion between the marvelous effect and the insignificant natural cause. On the one hand was the greatest empire in the world, on the other a band of twelve simple men who were rejected by their own people. Yet these rejected ones, of a despised and subject race, accomplished a fundamental alteration in the most powerful empire of history.

But in saying this we have adverted to the least wonderful item of this marvelous event. It was not so much the disparity of cause and effect that surpasses understanding as the nature of the revolution brought about. In order to understand the impossibility, from a human standpoint, of effecting this transformation, let us consider the following points: the ideas which the pagan intellect had to adopt, and the price the pagan had to pay for his conversion.

As regards the first point, the ideas which Christianity imposed on the pagan world, we know that in the time of Christ the pagans believed in a multiplicity of gods. Government and religion were firmly based on that belief. Christianity taught that there was but one God, and that all the deities the pagans worshipped

were nothing but fabrications. That was a terrible blow to the haughty pagan mind.

Christianity taught an incomprehensible mystery in regard to the one God, that there were three Persons in the Deity. For this they gave no demonstration, merely asserting it on the word of Christ, and offering no proof but the Resurrection. Christianity taught that God made all things out of nothing, by a creative act, Himself being eternal, self-existing, omnipotent and omniscient. That went directly against all the pagan notions of the origin of the world. It flatly contradicted all their cherished ideas.

Christianity taught that God truly became man, that Christ was God and man, the only Son of the eternal Father. And yet this God-man was crucified as an evil-doer by His own people. The pagans were thus required to worship one condemned as a criminal by their own tribunal.

Christianity taught that the God-man was truly present in the Eucharist, and that He was given as food for the spiritual nourishment of His followers, that they ate His body and drank His blood in receiving holy Communion. What an inconceivable idea for the pagan intellect!

We might continue to name dogmas of the re-

ligion of Christ which were to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the pagans foolishness. But we have given enough to show that inherently Christianity presented to the pagan mind doctrines which no human power could succeed in getting accepted. But these dogmas were accepted. How? It was the Resurrection.

That was the sign Christ pointed to as His great credential. That was the proof given by the Apostles for their claims. The pagans made sure of the truth of the Resurrection, and then they knew that what Christ taught was true.

Next, as regards the morality inculcated by Christianity, it will be seen that the difficulty here was just as great as in the case of dogma. For the pagan was a law unto himself. He satisfied his passions as he liked and made his vices respectable by fashioning a god unto them and worshipping it. That was the charm of idolatry.

We can form no idea of the state of pagan morals at the time of Christ. The very worst blots on modern civilization, the things which, if done at all, are done secretly and of which people are ashamed, were done openly and glorified by the pagans. There were exceptions here and there, but I am speaking, not of isolated

cases, but of the general tone of pagan society, high and low.

Vice was degrading and general. Temples and shrines and statues were erected to deities of immorality. The rites observed and the deeds performed in this worship would shock even vulgar people today. It was this cesspool of voluptuousness that the stern morality of Jesus Christ was to change into the pure fountains of living waters. The attitude of the pagan mind to the morality of Christ was as antagonistic as anything that it is possible for the human mind to conceive.

Yet Christian morality replaced pagan vice. What did it? No power of man. Socrates and Plato and other sages had endeavored to effect a change in the ways of mankind, but they got only a small following and that in academic fashion. But Christianity got a world-wide following, and that in the practical lives of its adherents.

Imagine what a barrier to the acceptance of Christianity among that people was such moral teaching as the following: "You have heard that it was said to them of old, thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say to you that whosoever shall look on woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his

heart" (Matt. V. 27); "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. V. 8).

The teaching of Christ went to the very root of the matter. It meant a radical change in the entire pagan system. Yet that change was effected. The truth of the Resurrection was so manifest that it put the divine seal on the mission of Christ, clothing Him with the power of Almighty God, making His words absolutely true, and sanctioning all His teaching.

The pagans bowed down their intellect to the truths preached by Christ, and conformed their lives to the morals He proclaimed, because they knew from the Resurrection that He was God legislating for them. Otherwise, how could they have accepted a religion which went directly against all their received notions?

We know how proud and cruel and unjust and arbitrary were these men of Greece and Rome. In Attica the official census made by Demetrius Phalereus gave the population as 60,000. Of these, 40,000 were slaves. At the time of Christ the majority of mankind were slaves. The great Aristotle taught that "Nature requires that there be slaves." Cato the philosopher shows us that the slave was regarded as a mere commodity: "A wise husbandman must

get rid of all implements no longer in use, worn out ploughs, old horses, aged slaves."

When a slave got sick, or maimed, or old, he was thrown out to starve and die, or else put to death. To lessen the expense of the animals kept for the circus, Caligula ordered them to be fed with slaves. The Romans had an expression to show the legal status of the slave: "Slaves are not entitled to leisure, they have no standing before the law, they do not count as persons."

With such a cruel and unjust world, what chance had the religion of the meek and humble Christ, Himself scourged as a slave and crucified as a malefactor by order of a Roman governor? Unless the Resurrection confirmed His teaching as divine, could such doctrine as the following ever gain admittance into pagan society and finally dominate it? These precepts are the very antithesis of everything pagan:

"All things therefore whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them" (Matt. VII. 12).

"You have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy. But I say to you: Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you, that you may be

the children of your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. V. 43).

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For he that will save his life shall lose it, and he that shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it" (Matt. XVI. 24).

Only God could talk that way. Only God could make such demands and guarantee such recompense. And what made the pagans listen to His message and lay down their lives for Him? It was because the Resurrection, to which He pointed as the divine sign confirming His words, was made manifest to them.

The Greeks and Romans had greater reason to question the Resurrection than we have. They questioned it, you may be sure, with the result that they believed it, and believed in Christ, the Son of God, and gave their lives in testimony of their faith.

This leads me to the consideration of the *third* factor in regard to the establishment of Christianity. For the pagan had not only to accept mysteries beyond his understanding, and morality which revolutionized his manner of living, but, in most cases during the first centuries, he had to pay the price of imprisonment, torture and death for his new religion. He thus

had to lower his pride of intellect and curb his lust for pleasure, and, at the same time, pay the greatest price that a man can give. Now men do not bind themselves thus and pay the supreme price for their bonds except for good cause. The good cause was the Resurrection, for in its truth they realized that the bonds were to make them free with the freedom of the children of God.

And now for a brief statement of the unparalleled sufferings which the early pagan converts endured for embracing the religion founded on the Resurrection.

The persecution of the Christians was both general and bloody. From Nero to Constantine millions of the best subjects of the Roman world were scourged, imprisoned, exiled, devoured by beasts, burned alive and beheaded for Christ. Ten distinct general persecutions were inaugurated by the Roman emperors. Diocletian took such severe measures for the repression of Christianity that he had a medal struck in commemoration of what he supposed was the end of that religion. This is the inscription: *Nomine christianorum deleto* (The Christians are no more). It is estimated that from nine to eleven millions of Christians were tortured during these ten persecutions. With what result?

"The blood of martyrs became the seed of Christians." The Roman Empire became Christian.

Nor can it be said that this fortitude was the result of a wave of fanaticism. First of all, fanaticism does not last that long, and secondly, fanaticism must be nourished by frenzy. But there was none of the frenzy of fanaticism about the Christian martyrs. They were calm, patient, forgiving, even praying for their torturers. They realized the great sacrifice they were making.

There were heart-breaking separations of husbands from wives, and daughters from parents, and aged fathers and mothers from beloved children. But it was borne patiently and encouragingly for Christ. Mothers exhorted their sons to courage before their tormentors, and children chanted hymns of praise when ordered to be devoured by wild beasts, advancing to torture as recollectedly and cheerfully as if going to a festival.

There was no rancor, no malice, no excitement, no emotionalism, about the martyrs. A lofty exhilaration based on the certainty of the Resurrection and of their own resurrection was their chief characteristic. As Stephen, the first martyr, prayed for those who were stoning him to death, so the millions of Christian martyrs

prayed for those who turned the wild beasts loose on them, or put the torch to their pitch covered bodies, or tied them up in sacks with serpents, to drown in the sea, or cut off their hands and feet, or had them tied to the heels of horses driven furiously. No manner of torture known to the brutality of that brutal age was spared the Christians. Yet they endured patiently and gladly for the name of Christ.

This is all so well known that it is not necessary to go into details. Any Church history of the period will give countless, well authenticated cases. Seneca, the pagan classic writer, states that the martyrs endured all that human barbarity could invent. Tacitus also says that the tortures inflicted on the Christians caused the most exquisite pains.

The absence of frenzy is the most notable thing about the Christian martyrs. They were gentle and calm amidst indescribable torments. Not only men, but little children and weak women showed the fortitude of heroes. This very calmness and the forgiving spirit of the martyrs caused innumerable conversions. The common sense of the spectators caused them to see that there was something more than human in the religion which inspired such fortitude, patience, prayerfulness and forgiveness.

As the thief on the cross was converted by the marvelous gentleness and patience of Jesus, so were many bystanders brought to the religion of the Crucified by the calmness and resignation of His followers during their passion. Thus Tertullian writes: "The more they slay us, the more we multiply, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of new Christians."

The peace and serenity which the martyrs displayed often caused the conversion of their very executioners and judges. I wish to bring this point out strongly, for it shows that what impelled the early Christians to suffer so heroically for Christ was not fanaticism, but a real, substantial and most firm conviction of the truth of the Resurrection.

They accepted that credential for the truth of Christ's divine mission, and consequently realized that, in losing their life for His sake, they were finding it anew in His kingdom. There is no other possible explanation for the constancy, fortitude, peacefulness and serenity of the millions of martyrs who suffered excruciatingly during two hundred years and in all parts of the Roman world.

Moral strength of such a nature does not belong to humanity. We might find it here and there, at certain periods, and for a short while,

but to find it everywhere, among every class and condition of mankind, and for hundreds of years, amidst the most prolonged and exquisite tortures, means that God sustained them, and that consequently their faith was divine.

Not one of these millions of martyrs was obliged to suffer. It was voluntary on their part. One word from them would have prevented or stopped their martyrdom. They merely had to say that they renounced Christ. But the truth of the Resurrection was so manifest to them that they preferred to lay down their lives for Christ rather than to retain life by rejecting Him.

Under the Emperors Diocletian and Maximus, the number of martyrs, according to tradition, was two million. They issued an edict "to tear down the churches to the foundations and to destroy the Sacred Scriptures by fire, to imprison bishops, priests and deacons and to compel them by every torture to renounce Christianity; to subject the laity to every manner of torture in order to force them to sacrifice to the pagan deities" (Euseb., *Eccl. Hist.,* VIII. 2). In one case the whole population of a town were massacred because they declared themselves Christians. (Euseb., *Eccl. Hist.,* VIII. 12). It was after these drastic measures that the em-

perors had the medal struck stating that Christianity was at last destroyed.

But Christianity was not destroyed. The emperors and their pagan empire passed away, but Christianity not only did not pass away, but remained and flourished, and spite of every obstacle and opposition, it spread over the whole world, until today we see it everywhere. It thus fulfilled the prophecy of its Founder, and this fulfilment in its turn becomes one of the greatest credentials of Christianity.

Unless God were with His Church, it had never survived the persecutions from without and the heresies from within. But Christ guaranteed His presence unto His Church, and that presence explains its life. "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth; going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (Matt. XXVIII. 18).

These words were spoken by Christ after His Resurrection. They were almost the last words spoken by Him to the Apostles. If you observe, He says: "Behold *I am* with you all days." He does not say: *"I shall be* with you," but *"I am*

with you all days." Only God can speak thus, for to God alone the future is present. There is no past or future with God—all is present. That is why Christ said to the Jews: "Before Abraham was made, *I am.*"

That was the name God gave Himself when He commissioned Moses to be the leader of the Israelites, *I am who am.* Jehovah is the Hebrew word for that expression. It means that God is the *Being existing always.*

And because Christ is God, the always existent Being, He said: "*I am* with you to the consummation of the world." Hence it is that His Church has always been divinely sustained. Were it not for that, the early persecutions would indeed have annihilated Christianity.

The faith of those early Christians was based on the Resurrection. By that they knew that Christ was what He said He was, for He appealed to the Resurrection as a confirmation of His divine claims. As the Resurrection required a divine power, it was the divine seal on Christ's mission. That was clear to the early Christians. That was why they believed and gave their lives for their belief.

The establishment of Christianity, therefore, was something beyond human power to effect. The doctrines it taught, the morals it inculcated,

and the persecutions which accompanied it, made it humanly impossible to succeed. The one reason given by the Apostles and their successors for its acceptance was the Resurrection.

The establishment being an undoubted fact, so was its cause, the Resurrection, a fact. The establishment being a fact beyond human power, so was its cause, the Resurrection, a fact beyond human power. The Resurrection was therefore a divine fact, the seal of God Almighty on the mission of Jesus Christ, the only Son of God.

AUTHORITY

It is not uncommon to hear, even from some pulpits, that the human mind should not be shackled by authority. A plea is made for freedom of thought in religious matters. It is claimed that God gave us our minds for our own guidance and direction and that authority puts a clamp on intelligent and progressive thinking.

All this would be very well if there were not a definite revelation from on high. If the Supreme Court of the United States hands down a decision, a lawyer, no matter how brilliant, is not free to accept or reject it. It serves as a guide for his thinking and argumentation. It does not interfere with but rather helps him in his preparation and presentation of a case, since the final issue will always be determined by the decision of the Supreme Court.

An architect is not free to make his plans as he likes. In everything he is guided by the laws of construction. This does not hamper but rather assists him, because any structure built

in violation of such laws would be a heap of ruins rather than an edifice.

Both lawyer and architect realize the necessity of directing their activities by the standards of their profession.

If a builder, in constructing a bridge, should want to give free rein to his plans regardless of the laws of stress and strain, he might in fancy erect a wonderful structure, but the first test of fact would cause its collapse.

So, with regard to free thought in religion, it all depends on whether or not there is a standard for religious thought as fixed as there is for law, architecture and building. There is. Jesus Christ came on earth to give us a set of truths which are as certain as the laws of nature. He declared: "I am the way, the truth and the life" (John XIV. 6). That His doctrine was to serve as guide for mankind, He proclaimed by saying: "I am the light of the world" (John VIII. 12); "Amen, amen, I say to you, he that believeth in me hath everlasting life" (John VI. 47). He established an institution to hold aloft that light to all generations unto the end of the world. "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you" (John XX. 21): "Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world" (Matt. XXVIII. 20). And to show that His

doctrine was really the standard of right belief He solemnly said: "Going therefore teach ye all nations, . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. XXVIII. 19), and "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark XVI. 16).

Once Christ, the Son of God, Jehovah Himself, proclaimed a body of truths, they became the standard of belief. What would you think of a lawyer who knew that his case was to be decided by a Supreme Court decision, and who would, nevertheless, because he claimed liberty of thought, argue his case without regard to the decision of that august tribunal? He might indulge his freedom of thought, but at the expense of his client and of his own reputation.

They who claim liberty of thought in religious matters are doing precisely what such a lawyer would be doing.

It all comes to this: either Christ gave a definite revelation, or He did not. If He did not, He could not have commanded mankind to accept it under eternal penalties. If He did, His revelation becomes the absolute standard of Christian thinking and belief.

There is no freedom of thought once a divine

revelation has been acknowledged, and if there has been no divine revelation, man is foolish to waste time on Christianity at all. If there has been no divine revelation, Christianity is simply a human cult with no sanction for its observance, and with no guarantee for its assurances. It becomes merely a philosophical or ethical code, with no obligation on man's part to accept it and live by it. But Christ is God. His teaching is a revelation from heaven.

For a Christian, whether clergyman or layman, to assert freedom of thought, once revelation has been acknowledged, is to take a position which it is impossible to reconcile with reason. Rejection of revelation is intelligible. Acceptance of revelation with liberty of thought is a contradiction in terms. If one should accept the services of an accredited guide over an unknown and dangerous territory, yet insist on directing oneself as one saw fit, one would be adjudged not only rash, but bereft of judgment.

And this is precisely what they do who accept revelation and, at the same time, claim liberty of thought on what revelation has pronounced.

There is wide latitude in the Christian religion. The history of theology is proof of this. Religion, ordinarily, does not interfere with human speculation except where revelation has

settled once for all the truth of the matter in question. If a man is crossing a deep chasm on a plank, he is not interfered with, but helped by the rail which prevents him from falling off. So revelation guides man and helps him to think aright. The only interference with liberty of thought which revelation causes is the prevention of disastrous thinking. For no conclusion which is at variance with revelation can, in the event, be beneficial to man. A traveler might enjoy himself hugely, and gain great temporary advantage, by ignoring his guide, but in the end, his liberty would cost him his life perhaps.

Christians who claim to do their own thinking, once Christ has settled the matter forever, may indeed enjoy their own fancy, but they are not followers of Christ. Why accept Christ at all if He be not true? And if He be true, why differ with Him? Some make answer that revelation was not absolutely fixed and definite, but that it was something flexible to be modified in the course of time as progress required. If that were so, the Apostles and martyrs were fools to die in torment for a fixed and definite body of doctrine. If that were so, who is to determine the flexibility of revelation and the time and circumstances of its modification? If each one may do it for himself, revelation has no

meaning. If some authorized person or institution is to do it, what becomes of liberty of thought? It is certainly better to have had Christ fix revelation once for all than to have it subject to man's caprice. If interpretation be necessary, divine is better than human, hence Christ has designated His Church to pronounce authoritatively on revelation when necessary. If the individual is to do it on personal grounds, revelation vanishes. We should, therefore, accept revelation, and be guided by it authoritatively, or reject it altogether. If it be accepted, man must forego his liberty of thought on what revelation has declared. If it be not accepted, there is an end altogether of supernatural religion.

It comes logically to the acceptance of revelation, without reservation, or to the rejection of revelation, with the loss of divine guidance and assurance, and the consequent rejection of Christianity.

Why have any religion at all if it be not divine? And if it be divine, why should it not be authoritative? Unless it be authoritative, it will have no influence on life in the great crises which occur in every human existence.

Man is naturally selfish. In the supreme events of life he will consult self-interest rather

than right, unless religion speak to him with the authority of God Almighty. Man wants authoritative assurance that if he suffer for justice' sake, he is not a victim of force, but a soldier of Christ, who can and will reward eternally all those who stand for righteousness.

Christ declared: "He who loses his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. X. 39). The victim of injustice or misfortune realizes that he is a victor eventually, if he endure manfully for Christ. But all the hope and all the trust inspired by Christ fade away with the rejection of revelation. We cannot accept part of revelation and reject part. It all hangs together either as God's word or as the fancy of a philosopher. Revelation being God's word, we bow down our judgment in acceptance of it. This is no surrender of reason, but its right use. For reason dictates that God who gave us our reason is not going to mislead it. They, therefore, who accept revelation as God's authoritative declaration do not give up their reasonable liberty of thought, but only safeguard it. For liberty is not license. Civic liberty does not give us the right to disrespect law and order. Liberty of thought does not give us license to say that two and two make five. Liberty of thought must respect mathe-

matics. So must liberty of thought respect revelation.

Christ, in giving us His teaching to serve as guide and help to our eternal destination, showed plainly that He wanted us to receive His doctrine on His authority. His religion is absolutely an authoritative religion. Religion which is not definite and authoritative is not divine. For religion is the expression of the Creator's will with regard to mankind. It tells man what God wants him to know and to do. Once God has told man certain truths and declared what duty mankind owes Him, these truths and duties admit of no alteration by man. There is no progress in revelation. They, therefore, err who regard religion as something in a state of evolution. Revelation is no more subpect to progress than are the laws of gravitation.

Divine religion is as true and as authoritative as God. It is only such a religion that has the power of influencing conscience authoritatively. Human cults may be beautiful and attractive, but they have no binding force on conscience, and give no guarantee that their promises will be fulfilled.

Religion, in order to make man live by it, and if need be, die for it, must speak with assurance, nay with certainty. And religion which does

not make man live by it, and if need be, die for it, is not worthy of God.

Religion may be defined as the expression of God's will with regard to man's duty to his fellow-man and to God Himself. If a commander-in-chief issue an order to the army, the soldier in the ranks must receive it as it is. He may not alter it nor substitute his own for it. Nor will it do to accept in its stead the orders formulated by a group of men in the ranks.

God Almighty is the Lord and Ruler of mankind. Religion proclaims the relation between Him and His subjects. Hence divine religion is definite and authoritative. It is based not on man's philosophizing but on God's revelation. Once God speaks it is clear that His message is true. It cannot be improved on by man, and it does not change with circumstances. There is no progress with truth. Once true always true. What God revealed two thousand years ago, or six thousand years ago, is as unalterable as the mathematical table. They deceive themselves and others who state that religion is perfecting itself with the advance of civilization. It was perfect when it came from the hands of God. The idea that some persons have of religious progress is the gradual attenuation of religion to the point of mere optional belief.

When it reaches that stage, it becomes nothing more nor less than an æsthetic cult, with little or no real influence on life and conduct.

It cannot be said too emphatically that unless religion be an authoritative and definite and certain pronouncement on man's relation to God the sooner it is abolished the better. For religion which is not authoritative, definite and certain is not God's revelation but man's invention. Religion which claims to be divine, and is not, is an imposition, a sham. It should have no place in intelligent society.

On the other hand, if religion be divine, it is the most important thing of life. It is God Almighty directing, helping, and encouraging man in his pilgrimage to eternity. It is the voice of God assuring man that he is engaged in no venture, but in a cause certain of a glorious issue.

With the assurance of Almighty God that righteousness will in the end prevail, every man has a source of peace amidst turmoil, of hope amidst depression, of strength amidst opposition and of light amidst darkness. True religion gives peace, hope, strength and light. It enables man to be virtuous in temptation, it gives him fortitude in bearing injustice, and furnishes him

with an outlook on life which makes the hardest existence not only bearable but desirable.

True religion gives man the power to be everything that a real man should be. It will make man a good citizen, an honest merchant, a faithful husband, a devoted son, a worthy father. For religion is nothing more nor less than the Creator's assurance that eternal life and happiness are the portion of that man who does what is right by his fellow-man and reverences the Lord of mankind. A man who bases his life on this foundation is building on the firmest basis of true manhood. The nation which builds on this foundation rests on the securest possible foundation.

For God is truth and justice. What is built on these supports will last in their final consequences as long as God. Not that victory for virtue is always the reward in this life. If it were this life would be the goal. For this world is not the goal but starting-point of man. Religion is God's guidance and help through life to the goal of eternity.

An uncertain guide is no guide. Religion must be certain and authoritative or we might as well not have it. If authority is doubtful or certainty questioned, the strongest motive for sacrifice is destroyed. Religion calls for sacri-

fice at every step. To be honest a man must frequently sacrifice gain. To be virtuous he must sacrifice pleasure. To be truthful he must sacrifice advantages and immunities. A man will cheerfully make every sacrifice which righteousness demands if he knows that the cause he is in, is right, and that it leads eventually to lasting triumph.

Unless religion be divine man has no guarantee either that its demands are right or that its hopes are certain of fulfilment. The best possible human religion will be able to do no more than appeal to man's nobler sentiments. But man is basically selfish, and if left to himself, will, in a crisis, follow the path of pleasure and profit. As long as no great temptation assails him, he will be virtuous, apparently. But we all meet with severe temptation, some of us constantly, all of us at times, and there is needed a certain assurance in such moments that right is above advantage and that sacrifice for virtue's sake is not lost. If we know that we are fighting for God in His cause we reck not the cost. But if we be uncertain, we shall be like those engaged in a doubtful enterprise of any kind, timid, faltering and finally discouraged.

That is why divine religion speaks with certainty and authority. Human nature is so con-

stituted that unless it be firmly and certainly guided it will guide itself, which means frequently, disaster. For our passions will master us and run away with us if not held in check by a sure and strong hand. Religion, true religion, is just that. They who make sentiment or passion their guide, are following a dangerous leader. For mankind generally, sentiment or passion will rule, unless religion be dominant.

Reason is a good guide, but, ordinarily, passion will not let reason hold the reins. Man, a being not only of intellect, but also of flesh and blood, requires something to fortify reason in its rule. We all approve of what is right—in others, but too often find ourselves doing what we condemn.

God made us and knows us. He knows us better than we know ourselves. When He established His religion He adapted it to our nature and our needs. If it is authoritative it is because it would be useless otherwise. If its teaching is definite, it is because nothing indefinite avails in supreme moments.

God gave us our religion through His only Son, Jesus Christ. Christ was certain in all He said and authoritative in all that He enjoined. His religion must be what He was, for He said of the Church which He established: "He who

hears you hears me." No religion which does not speak and act with the assurance of Christ can be His. Christ was not experimenting nor groping nor trying to find the light. He said, "I am the light of the world." He was not looking for truth. He had it and He imparted it to mankind. His religion is not and cannot be an unsettled state of mind. It cannot be a quest for truth; it is very truth.

Jesus Christ was authoritative. He was the most authoritative person this world has known. He never argued nor explained. He proposed nothing for debate. He talked with the finality of God. He did not propose His doctrine but imposed it.

The Jews themselves recognized this and were amazed at it. "The people were in admiration at his doctrine, for he was teaching them as one having power, and not as the scribes and Pharisees (Matt. VII. 29). They were so astonished at His authoritative declarations that they sent a delegation to ask Him: "By what authority dost thou these things; or who is he that hath given thee this authority?" (Luke XX. 2). His only reply was to reaffirm authoritatively the doctrine He was promulgating.

In the whole history of mankind there is nothing approaching the authoritative attitude of

Christ. His mere word was the only argument He advanced. And this word He set against the age-long traditions of the nation. "You have heard that it hath been said to them of old: Thou shalt not kill—but I say to you" (Matt. V. 20).

"You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say to you" (Matt. V. 27).

The scribes and Pharisees were regarded by the people as exemplars of righteousness. Jesus upsets this standard, assigning no reason, speaking with all the authority of God: "I tell you that unless your justice abound more than that of the scribes and Pharisees you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. V. 20).

In the Sermon on the Mount He repeatedly asserts His superiority over the most ancient traditions and laws by the simple statement "But I say to you." No wonder they said of Jesus "Never did man speak like this man" (John VII. 46).

If any one thing stands out clearly on every page of the Gospels it is the authority of Christ. He solemnly proclaims the duties and obligations of mankind and the penalties for failure to comply with them. And never does He assign any reason for His doctrine except His own

personality and the divine deeds which spoke for themselves. He never stooped to argument or explanation. He acted as God, as one having the right to be believed on His mere word.

All the truth which He came on earth to teach mankind He imparted to His Church. "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And behold I am with you all days to the end of the world" (Matt. XXVIII. 18). "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you" (John XX. 21).

Christ's Church is, therefore, the continuation of His ministry. That is why she transmits unaltered the deposit of doctrine which she received from Him. During all the centuries she has neither added to nor taken from the deposit of faith entrusted to her. She is in matters of doctrine as authoritative as Himself, and her teaching is as true as His. She represents Him on earth and will do so to the end of time. She meets with opposition as He did, she expects it, but she has His divine guarantee that she will triumph over every opposition. Like Him she has had and will have her Calvary, but as in His case, so in hers, Olivet follows Calvary. She is perpetually crucified, yet continues to live on, because He is with her. Like Him she speaks

with authority. Like Him she gives that peace which comes from certainty. Like Him she inspires that hope which is based on divine assurance. Like Him she comforts the poor and consoles the grief-stricken.

And the reason of it all is that her assurances have all the certainty of God's own guarantee.

Without authority religion is bankrupt. It has no reason for existence. If it does not speak with authority and guide with authority and assure with authority, it means no more to mankind than the pronouncements of Aristotle or Plato.

But man needs more than that. In prosperity he requires a check on his insatiable desires, and in poverty he needs an incentive to patient submission. All are not wealthy, and all who are wealthy are not in good health, and all who are rich and strong are not free from the anguish that comes from the loss of dear ones, from the depression of dark days, days of sorrow, pain, disappointment or apprehension, which all of us have some time or other. A firm stay is required in such periods. And that firm stay, that strong support is the authoritative revelation of Jesus Christ, which tells us that we are children of His Father, that we are on the way to a blessed home, and that the hardships on the way

thither do not matter, provided only that it lead us surely and securely thither.

Christ's authoritative revelation is the light of God illumining the path of man to a peaceful and joyful eternity. Does a traveler consider that a beacon light restricts his liberty of motion? Why then should man fear that the light of revelation restricts his reasonable liberty of thought?

Tourists on a highway do not consider that their liberty is restricted by the guide posts. *Liberty* is an abused and much misunderstood word. A navigator does not consider himself restricted because he must steer his course by the compass. He is free to ignore this guide if he wishes, but such liberty is disaster.

The revelation of Jesus Christ is the compass by which the voyager on life's ocean may securely make the haven of everlasting life, that port of peace and blessedness which God destines for all those who trust to His word and live by His will. Christ taught us to say to our Father in heaven, "Thy kingdom come" and He told us how that kingdom was to be ours, "Thy will be done." God's will is the greatest thing in life. Revelation shows God's will to us more clearly than we could know it by any human means.

Because, therefore, God designs to enlighten us by revelation shall we say that it restricts our reasonable liberty? Rather it makes us free with the freedom of the children of God.

A traveler in the dark groping his way feebly and uncertainly would not consider that a friendly and bright light interfered with his liberty of action.

Revelation is the light by which we pilgrims of earth may walk more securely than by any illumination which our reason of itself may provide. Authority is a blessed thing when it is God leading us. Revelation, when it is the voice of God, is the perfection of reason. Revelation is the basis of the religion of Jesus Christ.

The Church of Christ is the embodiment of His religion, and authority is the tone which characterizes the voice of His Church.

Revelation, Church, authority! The triune Light of the world! Today more than ever this Light is needed by groping and sinful man.

CHRISTIAN FAITH

The present day controversy between Fundamentalists and Modernists is due in great measure to a misunderstanding of the nature of Christian faith.

Recently a Modernist declared that his intellect was given him by the Creator and that he was not going to surrender it to any Church authority. He added that he was capable of reasoning for himself and did not want any one else to do it for him.

This statement reflects the attitude of many who are opposed to authoritative religion. But it rests altogether on a gratuitous assumption. He who is guided by the Church of Christ does not surrender his reason. In submitting to the authority of the Church of Christ one does not submit to a human institution but to Almighty God. Unless one believes that the Church of Christ is the voice of God, one should not belong to it. And if one does believe that the Church of Christ is the voice of God, one does not surrender reason in following her, but rather makes

a wise use of reason. God, who gave us our reason, is not going to mislead it if we submit it to Him.

When a layman consults a lawyer and is guided by his counsel, he does not surrender his reason, but makes good use of it. His reason tells him that it is reasonable to take the advice of an expert.

When a man submits to the Church of Christ, he does not surrender his reason to an institution nor to a body of men, nor to any individual. In submitting to the Church of Christ a man submits his reason to God Almighty who gave it. In this submission, I repeat, there is no surrender of reason, but a reasonable and reverent use of it. Either the Church of Christ is a divine institution or it is not. If it is, it is the voice of God. If it is not, it has no reason for existence as a Church.

Unless one believes that the Church of Christ is as true as God, one should not enter it. If the Church of Christ is a merely human organization, or if it is fallible, it is nothing more than a school of philosophy. No human or fallible institution may speak authoritatively to the conscience of man.

Unless a man firmly believes that the Church of Christ speaks with the authority of God, he

is out of place in it. Why a Church at all, unless it gives a certainty and assurance and guidance which no human institution can give? If the Church of Christ does not enlighten us surely, and guide us unerringly, it is a misnomer. If it does inform us truly, and direct us right, where is the surrender of reason in submission to her?

Christ said of His Church, "He who hears you hears me." If the Church of Christ is not a continuation of the mission of Christ on earth, it is an imposition, for it claims to be that. As Christ could not teach false doctrine, neither can His living voice, the Church. This sums up the matter briefly.

Either the Church of Christ is the living, infallible voice of God or it is not. If it is not, it has no claims on mankind, and serves no purpose other than that of a school of speculative thought. Hence the Christian, who is one who believes that the Church of Christ is a divine institution, regards the Church as the voice of God. If one receives a message over the telephone, it is not considered as coming from the telephone, but from the author of the message. In some such way the Church is God's means of speaking to mankind. The Church of Christ has no reason for existence if it is not just that.

An objection to this status of the Church is that she cannot be the representative of God because she has erred and has given scandal. To this objection it is replied that the Church of Christ, like the Supreme Court of the United States, may be considered personally and officially.

Personally the Church is made up of all who belong to her, the good, bad and indifferent. Christ foretold that scandals would come in the Church, although He declared woe unto them that cause them. He came for sinners and instituted sacraments for sinners, hence His Church does not exclude sinners, but tries to convert them to holiness of life.

Personally any member of the Church may fall into sin. No one is immune, from the highest to the lowest. Even under the living headship of Christ Himself one of the Apostles was a stumbling-block and a scandal.

Officially, the Church is considered in her magisterial capacity, just as we regard our Supreme Court in its judicial capacity. The Church magisterially is the official spokesman of God. In this capacity she cannot err in matters pertaining to faith and morals, she cannot go astray morally by teaching or sanctioning what is sinful. As the Supreme Court is limited

officially to decisions affecting the Constitution, so the Church of Christ is limited magisterially to what pertains to religion. When we refer to the Church magisterially we mean in her character as a divinely commissioned teacher, as the living representative of her founder, Jesus Christ.

Christ said He would not leave us orphans. In His stead He appointed the Church as our guide and teacher. He, although divine, and knowing all things, limited His mission to matters pertaining to the kingdom of God. Outside that sphere He made no contribution to our knowledge. That is the Church's sphere also. Outside that she has no guarantee from on high.

It is only in her magisterial character and in matters pertaining to faith that she is the voice of God, the representative of God. The highest personage of the Church may go astray both in morals and in personal opinions, just as the chief justice of the Supreme Court may, but officially in matters pertaining to revelation, the Church cannot go astray.

God's guarantee has been given her: "He who hears you hears me"; "As the Father hath sent me so I send you"; "I am with you all days to the consummation of the world." Christ cannot abide with error, hence His Church can

never err in matters of faith. God could not command us to obey the Church if she were liable to error, for otherwise He would be responsible for erroneous conduct.

Whenever the Church speaks magisterially we are as secure in listening to her and following her as if God Himself stood before us and spoke to us. Unless, in very truth, this is the nature of the Church of Christ, she has no claim on our submission, and we should not hesitate to ignore her. This being the nature of the Church, right reason dictates that our submission to her is highly reasonable.

It cannot be supposed that those mighty intellects which have adorned Christian philosophy were misled when they bowed down in reverence to the Church. Augustine, Justin, Chrysostom, Aquinas, Pascal, Pasteur, Newman and a host of the world's master minds did not consider that they were surrendering or betraying reason when they made their submission to the Church of Christ. They would not have remained in the Church if they did not believe it the voice of God. And believing it the voice of God, they considered it no slight to their reason to accept as infallible truth what she taught.

That is the only position a real Christian may

take. One who believes that the Church of Christ may mislead or teach false doctrine has a mistaken idea of what the Church of Christ is. Why, in the name of heaven, should Christ establish a Church at all if it left man where he was without it?

Previous to Christ's establishment of the Church man was, in great measure, left to his own guidance in spiritual matters. If man was to continue to grope and to seek for the truth, what was the use of Christ's declaring the truth and establishing an institution for safeguarding and transmitting it? They who renounce Christianity altogether may be at least consistent. But the Christian who believes that the Church of Christ can err is highly inconsistent, and is only a Christian nominally. One may be in doubt as to which is the true Church of Christ. In that case, it is one's duty to inquire and to be certain. Unless one is certain one should not accept membership in a Church. Once certain that one is in the Church of Christ, there is no alternative to accepting its teaching as divine. Hence a real Christian, in submitting his judgment to the Church of Christ, does not surrender but rather safeguards his reason.

When the Apostles went forth on their mission, it was to be witnesses to the personality and

doctrine of Christ. A witness is one who testifies to something objective. A witness does not give his own views, nor anything of a subjective character, but testifies to a fact or statement. The Apostles testified to the divine personality of Christ, to His miracles and His doctrine. They bore testimony to Christ and His teachings, not to anything concerning themselves.

A witness does not state his personal opinions, but records the deeds and sayings which he observed. Christ said of the Apostles that they should be witnesses to Him. That was their special mission, and they fulfilled it even when their testimony cost their lives.

And that is the mission of the Church today. She testifies to the personality and doctrine of Christ. The Church has originated no doctrines. She has simply acted as a faithful custodian of what her Founder entrusted to her. As time and circumstances required, she has brought out into brighter light what was her treasure always.

The Church is like the custodian of an art gallery who from time to time brings out into greater prominence a masterpiece, which was always among his treasures, but which some occasion makes it desirable to display prominently. By bringing a work of art into prominent dis-

play and better light, he does not add to his collection, but merely emphasizes a certain part of it.

So the Church from time to time sets forth the deposit of truth confided to her by Christ. She never adds to what He entrusted to her, but when circumstances threaten to distort or hide a doctrine she brings it out into the clear light, by declaring what it was as Christ gave it to her.

Outside the Church of Christ those who testify are witnesses to themselves, not to Christ, since they give their own views. But such a one is not really a witness, he is a self-advocate. There is no merit in upholding oneself or one's own opinion.

The Christian witness testifies not to what he himself thinks but to what Christ through His Church teaches.

Everybody loves his own opinion and delights in maintaining it. That is not faith, but self-assertion. Faith means the adhesion to what another holds and declares. Consequently a witness to Jesus Christ or His Church is one who testifies to what Christ revealed, not to his own theories of revelation.

Faith is not selective. As soon as one exercises a choice as to what one believes, it ceases to be

faith. If you have faith in a person you cannot accept half or a third of what he says and reject the rest. Once you begin to discriminate, and to accept or reject parts of a statement, you relinquish faith.

Hence there is no room for private judgment once the Church of Christ has spoken magisterially. If the Supreme Court of the United States hands down a decision, argumentation ends. Talented lawyers do not consider that they are surrendering reason by bowing to such a decision, for they realize that it is reasonable to have a court of final judgment. Without it, litigation would be endless. Learned men acquiesce in such a condition of affairs because it is highly reasonable to do so.

It is still more reasonable to bow down to a Church which God Almighty has constituted and guaranteed to teach truth always. If one does not believe that the Church is so guaranteed, one is unreasonable in belonging to it, for its very purpose is to give divine guidance. But divine guidance cannot exist along with error. Hence it is highly reasonable to submit our judgment to a Church which is divinely directed. Of course one should employ reason to the full in order to make sure that the Church of Christ is really a divine institution. Unless

one's investigation and study convince one that the Church is divine, one should not enter it. But, and this is the point of essential importance, if it is divine, it cannot misguide.

The whole matter resolves itself to this: Either the Church is divine or it is not. If it is divine, it cannot err. If it is not divine, it gives man nothing but what a fallible human institution can give, and does not speak authoritatively to conscience, and hence ceases to influence conduct except by appeal or advice, which means little or nothing in the great temptations of life.

Those who belong to other than the true Church of Christ take it for granted that their churches can err. They thus profess to belong to an erring Church. Such cannot be Christ's. They recognize no authoritative teaching or interpretation, thus confessing that their churches cannot teach authoritatively. Even the clergy of these churches admit no teaching authority. Hardly any two of their clergymen hold the same doctrine. Truth is one and the same always. By admitting all sorts of doctrine, even in their pulpits, they show that they have not the truth.

Hence, as was said in the beginning, the controversy about the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection arises from a misunderstanding of

the nature of Christian faith. The Church of Christ teaches and always has taught the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection. For a Christian that ends it. In the Apostles' Creed, the most ancient confession of faith of the Church of Christ, it is stated: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary."

That is as clear as words can make it. If that profession of faith was true in the Apostolic era it is true now. If it was false then, all Christianity is false and revelation is a sham.

This same Apostles' Creed also states that Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. The third day He rose again from the dead."

It is impossible to be more explicit than that. This declaration was true then or false. If it was true then it is true now. If it was false then it follows that the whole Christian edifice rests on a false basis, because the Apostles themselves gave the Resurrection as the main proof and foundation of the religion they preached.

Away then with revealed religion altogether if the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection are

not facts. Reject Christian faith entirely if its fundamental beliefs are false.

But the Christian basis is true. The Church of Christ is built on a rock. The storms and tempests of twenty centuries have but served to show her strength and indestructibility. Unless she were divinely built on the rock of truth, she had long since crumbled under the dreadful assaults she has sustained. But because her architect was divine, and because she is true, she is proof against the assaults of error and the ravages of time. Error cannot endure relentless battering, but truth can. And because the Church of Christ is true, the blows aimed at her instead of destroying her have but served to show her vitality. Her existence today is a miracle and a visible proof of the truth of Christ's guarantee that she was to last forever. For although time has not ended, the future can have no greater dangers than the past.

We embarked on life's ocean at birth. Our destination is the eternal shore beyond. On this trackless and treacherous ocean there is a bark whose pilot never fails to bring securely to port those who entrust themselves to his guidance. This bark is the Church of Christ. It is the one craft on the ocean of life where there is certainty. There may be storms, but this vessel will ride

them. There may be attacks by hostile craft, but they will be repelled. This bark may encounter fogs and hidden dangers, but through them all she will emerge unscathed, because her Pilot commands the winds and the waves and knows the secrets of the deep. Those aboard may experience difficulties and trials, but doubt will not be among them. Hence, there will abide with them that peace which nothing in the world can give, and which nothing can take away, peace which means more than all else to the human heart. Knowing that the vessel is certain to reach port, all on board cheerfully endure hardships of whatever nature until the vessel reaches the blessed haven of eternal life.

Today, more than ever, we need a stout ship and a safe pilot. Every day finds the ocean of life strewn with wrecks. Pretentious vessels, offering every luxury and comfort, attract passengers aboard. They sail majestically for a time, only to go under with the first real storm. Their own weight of worldliness would suffice to sink them, but there is also the added danger of a pilot's sailing without a compass over an uncharted sea.

Some there are who prefer to find their own way rather than be guided. They prefer the

adventure and uncertainty of self-guidance to the security of the beacon light of truth.

Those in the vessel of Christ's Church are serene, knowing they are safe. No danger can hurt them if they remain aboard, and no one can make them quit the ship but themselves. Securely and serenely they make the voyage of life. Hardships they may have, and sore trials, but they know that the issue is life eternal, and with that in view have strength and courage to do and endure manfully.

That is the real meaning of Christian faith. It is incompatible with doubt or dejection. It is God leading us by the hand to the blessed home of eternal life and joy.

LIFE

Life is man's greatest enigma. What is life for? Is it for itself? Does it end all? These questions have engaged the mind of man from the beginning.

On man's view of life depends in great measure his career in life. It makes a vast difference whether one is made for time or eternity. If this life be all, one's policy should be to live only for present welfare. But if this life is only the first stage of existence, one must so live it as not to mar the rest.

By revelation we know that this world is not the goal but the starting-point of man. We have not here a lasting city. We begin to die as soon as we are born. Every day brings us nearer the grave. This life is a perpetual struggle to ward off death, which in the end conquers regardless of our efforts.

Christ said that He came to give life. He was not speaking of this present life, which His hearers already had, and which is rather a living death, but of true life, life which knows no end,

and no struggle and no anguish. He was speaking of that life which is unending peace and joy and glory. It was to this life He referred when He said: "He who loses his life for my sake shall find it." It was on account of the nature and value of the life He came to give that He said: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul" (Mark VIII. 36).

Our present life is a pilgrimage to eternity. Christ came in order to direct us on the way and to help us. "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

The object of Christ's coming was not to give us sweets on the way, although to them that love Him He is very sweet indeed, but to lead us to the everlasting sweets of His heavenly banquet. He did not come to give us material comforts, nor worldly distinction, nor wealth, but for one thing mainly, to give us eternal life, a share in His life: "To as many as received him he gave the power to become the sons of God."

Some there are who esteem religion for the prosperity it may bring. By the standard of prosperity where would Christ and the Apostles be? Others appraise religion by social distinction. Again what of Christ and the Apostles? There are others who value religion by the com-

forts and advantages associated with it. But Christ said that His kingdom was not of this world.

Today religion with many has degenerated into a merely human association for material well-being. Not that real and true religion overlooks the needs and advantages of life, but that it rates them properly. It makes eternal life the paramount issue, without neglecting the duties and obligations of this life. But with many the paramount issue is welfare here and now.

The real welfare, the life that knows neither bitterness nor pain, nor weariness nor end, is sacrificed for a passing pleasure on the way. The pleasures and comforts of a journey are not to be despised, but if they cause the wayfarer to turn aside and lose his way, they become detrimental rather than beneficial.

It is common in the present age to make the side issues of life the main issue. This is to reverse the whole purpose of life as proclaimed by Christ. The Christian outlook on this present life is to regard it as a necessary stage to eternal life. We must live in this world, but not for it. By living mainly for this world, we fail to attain even worldly peace, while by living

mainly for eternal life we have peace here and everlasting welfare beyond.

The most unhappy people are they who make the pleasures and emoluments of the world their main pursuit. It is like trying to quench thirst with salt water. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice and all these things shall be added unto you" (Luke XIII. 31).

The worldly person mainly seeks the material prizes of life only to find in the end that he is empty-handed. Christ's mission was to impress on mankind the real worth of man. "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul" (Mark VIII. 37).

Life, regarded as Christ teaches us to regard it, is a most glorious crusade, whose object is the throne of God. "To him that shall overcome I will give to sit with me in my throne" (Apoc. III. 21). In this crusade for the throne of immortal glory Christ is our great Captain. He is a Captain who leads, not one who merely commands. He goes before, every step of the way. He is a Captain who inspires loyalty and love. Under His leadership sacrifice becomes not only bearable but desirable. The crusade of Christ gives an answer to the problem of life. It makes life, even the meanest, worth while. It gives a meaning and value to suffering and

sacrifice. Life, as we know, is a warfare. Christ makes this warfare a glorious campaign. Under His leadership Christians endure with fortitude and cheerfulness the hardships and wounds of life's struggle. They know that victory is certain. The only way they can lose is to drop out of the army of Christ. And no one can make them do that. If they drop out they must desert, they must of their own accord leave the ranks. As surely as they remain with the body they will share in the eternal triumph of the Head. It is the certainty that the sacrifices of Christian warfare terminate in a glorious victory that gives to the followers of Christ that peace which the world cannot give—nor can it take away.

The true Christian has no fears, no doubts. Difficulties there may be, but ten thousand difficulties do not make a doubt. The Christian's faith rests on the word of God. The religion of Christ is not a theory or a philosophy, but a revelation from on high. Revelation is something entirely different from everything else in the range of knowledge.

In the first place, it is not the result of human endeavor. The loftiest human intellect could not attain by reason what revelation imparts. Revelation is something higher than reason,

above the reach of mere reason, yet not opposed to reason. It is knowledge about God and the hereafter which reason of itself could never discover, but which God Himself has graciously given to man for better guidance to his final end.

The knowledge of God which we gain by faith may be compared to that which we obtain of the firmament by night. If it were always day we should not know of the marvelous nature of the starry realm. By day we perceive nothing above, but the blue of the sky or shifting clouds. And that is all we should know of the heavens if it were always day. The vastness and variety and magnitude of the firmament would be forever hidden from us.

By no human means could we obtain a view or knowledge of the firmament unless night with its mantle of darkness came to our aid.

By faith and by revelation we learn things about God and about our own selves which otherwise we should not know.

What night is to the firmament, that revelation is to God and ourselves. It tells us who made the world, that the Creator is our Father, that our souls are immortal, that we shall rise again to everlasting life and that this everlasting life will be happy or miserable according to

what we make it during the short day of mortal life.

It is true that by reason we may know that there is a God and that He is a rewarder of good and a punisher of evil. But that is very little. It tells us almost nothing about the nature or personality of God, and of His relations with us. Revelation is a message from the Creator to the creature on what is of supreme importance to our peace here and our welfare hereafter.

The Christian religion is called our Holy Faith because faith in God's word is the basis of our belief. We can no more discern the truths of revelation by ourselves than we could learn of the firmament by day.

Hence revelation, being God's communication, is absolutely and entirely true. This gives it its value. The man who believes in revelation and lives by it knows that he is in a true and triumphant cause.

In the affairs of life nothing affords such an incentive for doing and enduring as certainty of the successful issue of an undertaking. Revelation gives this certainty. It was because of this that Christianity got its foothold in the world. Everything was arrayed against it. Power, wealth, pleasure, distinction were drawn

up in opposition to the preaching of the Apostles. But because of the certainty associated with the assurances of the Gospel, Christianity prevailed over all the forces of the world.

Today revelation is the mightiest power on earth. It gives an incentive to the most heroic deeds of mankind. It makes a man hold the world and all its allurements as nothing in comparison with the final issue of Christian endeavor. Revelation gives heart to the oppressed, hope to the discouraged, cheer to those in pain, and courage to those who are weary and heavy laden.

But revelation does more than this. It sets the mind of man at rest by giving the final answer to the perplexities of life, an answer which not only explains its vicissitudes, but also justifies them, and moreover makes them the means of man's fulfilment of a most glorious destiny.

The essential characteristic of revelation is its divine origin, and, in consequence, its absolute and unchangeable truthfulness. "I give you to understand that the Gospel which was preached by me is not according to man, for neither did I receive it of man, nor did I learn it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. I. 11, 12).

Because the Gospel is a revelation from on

high it is a supernatural enlightenment. St. Paul calls attention to this when he says: "We give thanks to God without ceasing because that when you had received of us the word of the hearing of God, you received it not as the word of men but (as it is indeed) the word of God" (I Thess. II. 13).

If the mightiest monarch of earth should state to some of his subjects who were enduring hardships and making sacrifices for him, that he would be mindful of them in due time and gratefully reward them for their devoted attachment to his cause, they would be glad to bear every privation and pain that his service entailed. No matter what sacrifices they might be called on to make, they would make them cheerfully.

By revelation the Ruler of the world, the King of time and eternity, assures us that if we serve Him faithfully in the brief day of this life we shall share His eternal glory hereafter. This divine assurance it was that brought to mankind, even the lowliest, a peace and hope which conquered all the material forces arrayed against the followers of the Gospel.

The Gospel is the truth of God. That is why it is so efficacious. No book of man could inspire the confidence and hope which the Gospel gives. Being the truth of God it does not admit

of doubt. Once you doubt the truth of the Gospel narrative you doubt God Himself, for the Gospel is the word of God. You may persuade yourself that the Gospel is not God's word and reject it, but you cannot logically believe in the Gospel and doubt any statement found therein. Either it is God's word or it is not. If it is God's word it is as true as God. If it is not God's word, it should be rejected altogether for it claims to be that, and if it is not, it is a deception, and the sooner it is destroyed the better, for a sham should never be tolerated.

Christians believe that the Gospel is God's word. This brings us to the most important thing in connection with the Gospel.

There has sprung up recently a class of Christians who, while retaining the name of Christian, assert the right to accept or reject revelation according as they see fit. This destroys the whole concept of revelation. One might as well say to Almighty God: "I claim the right to accept or reject what you say." The very idea of God is truth. It is a contradiction in terms to acknowledge God and admit the possibility of error in Him. Light and darkness cannot exist together. Neither can God and error. Hence, when we realize that God has spoken that ends doubt on our part. Once His word

is uttered it is not for us to discuss it, but to reverence it. If it is above our comprehension so is God Himself.

If we accepted from Him only what we could understand, it would not be faith on our part, but only the result of demonstration. God is entitled to be believed because He is God. Those who accept revelation in part and reject it in part make God to be fallible like themselves. If the Gospel is not entirely and absolutely true it is not from God and is not entitled to credence at all. But if it is from God it is to be accepted with all the reverence and certainty that we should give to God Himself if He appeared in person to us and addressed us.

We should employ our reason to learn if the Gospel claim is true, and if we accept it as such, the Gospel is to be credited as God Himself. If our reason reject the Gospel claim, we should reject the Gospel and renounce Christianity, which stands or falls with the Gospel because the Church has committed herself to the truth of the Gospel.

Now the point is this, and it cannot be made too clearly or strongly. The man who calls in question the truth of a Gospel statement is not in reality a Christian. The Virgin Birth, the

Resurrection, and other Gospel facts are not to be believed because the ordinary procedure of nature justifies them but because God declares them. If we make our experience the standard of acceptance we must reject all the salient facts of the Gospel: the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Eucharist and the rest. None of these fundamental Christian verities can be established by human reason. That is why they are called mysteries, the mysteries of our Holy Faith. They are outside the range of reason.

If we accepted only what we comprehended, the religion of Christ would not be faith, but evidence. But it is *faith*. Over and over again Christ insists on the necessity of faith in Him. He makes faith paramount. He never explained His revelation. He proved by His words and deeds that He was God, and then demanded of His followers that they believe Him as God.

The Gospel is filled with truths and deeds which are in the same class with the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection. If one wants to apply the rule of ordinary processes of nature to the Gospel facts it will be found that virtually the entire Gospel will have to be discarded. The Gospel facts are above reason but not against reason. They imply supernatural agency. Hence, to reject the Virgin Birth or

the Resurrection because they are not in accord with natural procedure is to place the Gospel and its facts on a purely natural basis. In that case the Gospel vanishes as a record of divine achievement and as a divine message of peace and hope and assurance to mankind.

The mistake now being made by supposed Christians is to explain Christianity without God. Take God out of the Gospel narrative and you have a heap of impossibilities. With God you have a record of divine deeds and a covenant of divine assurances. The Gospel had never transformed the world if it did not record the supernatural events in a supernatural manner.

So let it be said emphatically that we must reverence the Gospel as God's word and believe it in the spirit of divine faith or cast it aside entirely, thereby renouncing our Christian heritage. If God has spoken by the Gospel we may not accept part and reject part, but must reverently accept it in its entirety. If God has not spoken by the Gospel we have been deceived and imposed upon, and we should thrust it aside and put it out of our lives altogether.

It is a historical fact that the Gospel has been accepted as God's word from the days of the Apostles. It was for Gospel truths that the

early Christians suffered persecution, exile and death. They did not understand how Christ rose from the dead, but they believed that He did rise, and were willing to die for their belief. They did not understand the doctrine of the Trinity, but they accepted it as Christ's word, and witnessed to their faith by their blood.

If we proceed, as some are doing now, to measure Gospel facts by natural processes, we shall have left very little or nothing of the Gospel. If the Gospel recorded only what was naturally possible, it would afford no proof of Christ's divinity. It was because the Gospel facts were naturally impossible that Christ pointed to them saying: "If you do not believe me believe the works which I do, they give testimony of me."

Christ first of all established the fact that He was God and then demanded to be heard as God. He frequently declared to His hearers that unless He had done the things which God alone could do they were not to blame for their disbelief. But having done repeatedly what was possible only to divine power He held them responsible for not accepting His claims. He appealed to His Resurrection as the crowning proof that He was God.

If the Resurrection could be explained by

natural means it would not have been a proof of the supernatural claims of Christ.

They, therefore, who accept or reject Gospel facts by the standard of natural possibility destroy the very basis of revelation. The only proof of revelation is supernatural corroboration. Remove the supernatural from the Gospel facts and revelation vanishes.

They who apply the natural rule to the Gospel facts are, therefore, inconsistent, illogical and subversive of Christianity. They may mean well, but it is not the first time that well-meaning persons have done harm to their own cause.

If we weigh Gospel facts in the scale of natural possibility we find ourselves obliged to pronounce them impossible. Naturally so. If they were not naturally impossible they would not be an argument for revelation. Every Christian, therefore, who rejects Gospel facts which do not square with natural laws is taking the ground from under himself. Far from being surprised that the Gospel records naturally impossible events we should be surprised if it did not. For what credentials of His divine mission did Christ present if not supernatural deeds?

Unless Christ be very God what is He other than a sage, even though the greatest sage?

But the greatest sage cannot give life everlasting. The greatest sage cannot guarantee that he who loses his life shall find it. The greatest sage cannot give that certainty and assurance which makes one prefer to lose the whole world rather than one's soul. The greatest sage cannot give that peace which the world cannot give or take away. The greatest sage cannot persuade millions of followers that they must prefer him to father and mother and all things else in life, and even to life itself.

No sage, no human being, no matter what his rank, could speak with the authority and the omnipotent assertions of Christ. Consider His commission to the Apostles when He sent them forth, as His Church, to impart to mankind the message of the Gospel. "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world" (Matt. XXVIII. 18-20).

No one but God could give a commission like that. For any human being to say that he had all power in heaven and in earth, and to state that he would be with his followers always, even to

the end of the world, would be blasphemy or insanity.

We must, therefore, accept His statement as divine and true or reject it as an insane delusion. Since we cannot conceive of Christ as an insane person, we must accept His statement and believe that He will abide with His Church forever. He was addressing the Apostles not in their personal but official capacity. Personally they were not to live until the end of the world. But, officially, in their successors, they were to continue forever.

It was because of this guarantee of Christ that in all ages His followers were willing to lay down their lives in His cause. Millions, literally *millions,* have gone to death for Jesus Christ and the Faith He taught. And why? Because they believed He was God. And why did they believe He was God? Because of His life and deeds. His life, from Bethlehem to Calvary, was filled with divine doings. His Incarnation was by divine power, His birth from a Virgin was divine. His miracles were a manifestation of the Godhead, His death was proclamation of life and His Resurrection was the final seal of divinity.

He foretold His death and Resurrection. That in itself was something divine. No one but

God knows the future actions of free creatures. Christ, in His own name and by His own power, foretold His betrayal, His scourging, His crucifixion, His Resurrection.

And the Jews knew it. They asked Pilate for a guard over the tomb stating that Christ said He would rise the third day after His crucifixion. It may be said, Why did they not believe in Him after this prophecy had been fulfilled? For the same reason that they did not believe in Him after the resurrection of Lazarus. They were not looking for the truth. As proof, let me repeat, they tried to destroy Lazarus, the living evidence of Christ's power (John XII. 10).

Christ had said that His kingdom was not of this world. They wanted a worldly kingdom, and hence rejected Him, as is done by many today. Christ's Resurrection was a twofold manifestation of divinity, the fact of the Resurrection itself, and its prophecy. It was because of the Resurrection, as said repeatedly, that the religion of Christ was established in the world. The people of that day were in a position to know about it. When they accepted it, knowing that its acceptance meant imprisonment and death, it was because it was a fact, a supernatural fact.

The Church of Christ preached the Resurrection, as the strongest proof of its divine origin and nature. "If Christ be not risen again then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain" (I Cor. XV. 14).

Now, after twenty centuries, to call in question the fact of the Resurrection, because it transcends natural law, is to undermine the whole Christian structure. The Gospel teems with the supernatural. It was the main reason for its propagation. Men would not have changed from the luxurious indulgence of paganism to the self-denial demanded by the Gospel if it were not that they regarded it as divine. The very cause of the triumph of revelation, the supernatural character of the Gospel facts, is now declared by some to be a fallacy.

Let us be consistent, accept the Gospel as a record of the supernatural or reject it as a delusion. The Church of Christ has from the beginning proclaimed the Gospel as God's word. Christ established His Church to teach the truth and promised to abide with her forever. He did not write a single line Himself. He established a living organization to proclaim His religion.

This Church gave us the Gospel as a record of His life and teaching. She who gave it to us is its custodian and interpreter. The Gospel

is God's truth. This truth may be in parable, in symbol, in very literalness.

The Church which gave us the Gospel is the living divine authority which declares what is literal and what is figurative in it. This divine document is not its own interpreter. The Church of Christ, as occasion requires, states the exact meaning of any part that may be in question.

From the very days of the Apostles the Church has proclaimed certain truths absolutely. Among these truths are the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection.

In the Apostles' Creed we say: "I believe in Jesus Christ who was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary." We also say, "the third day He rose again from the dead." If that profession of faith is not true, away with revealed religion altogether.

Christ by the Church has provided a means of our instruction in truth, and our guidance in the pilgrimage of life. By this provision of God we are not looking for the truth, we have it. We are not groping in the dark but have the light. We are not in doubt but rejoice in certainty. That is why the true Christian has peace and security. That is why life is not an

enigma to a true follower of Christ who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Now more than ever the world needs His help and His guidance and the assurance of a participation in His life.

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SCOTT, M.I.

AUTHOR

The Virgin Birth

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